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PULPIT PORTRAITS,

OR

PEN-PICTURES

OF

DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN DIVINES;

WITH

SKETCHES OF CONGREGATIONS AND CHOIRS;

AND INCIDENTAL NOTICES OF

EMINENT BRITISH PREACHERS.

BY JOHN ROSS DIX,

AUTHOR OF "PEN AND INK SKETCHES;" "PASSAGES FROM THE  
HISTORY OF A WASTED LIFE;" "PEN-PICTURES OF  
ENGLISH PREACHERS;" "THE LIFE OF  
CHATTERTON;" ETC.



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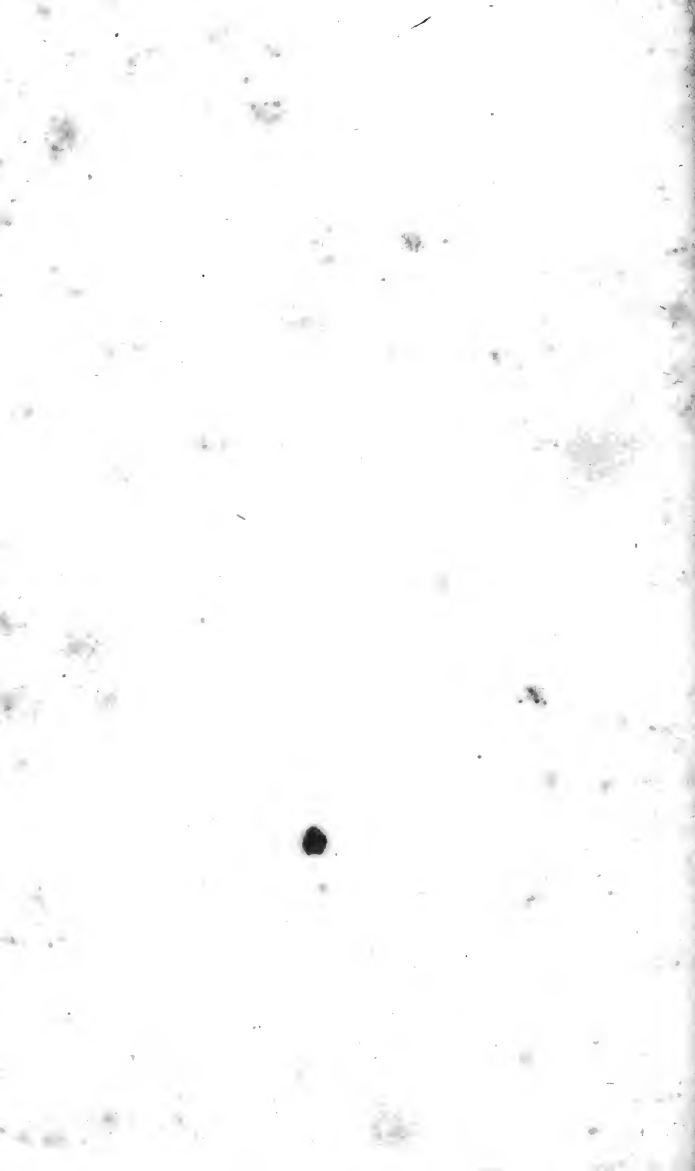
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# PULPIT PORTRAITS:

OR,

## P E N - P I C T U R E S .

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### CHAPTER I.

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS. A DULL PREACHER. REMINISCENCES OF PULPIT ORATORS. A WORD OR TWO ABOUT WHAT IS TO COME.

I HAVE always been a lover of eloquence. No matter whether it issued from the pulpit or the platform; from the calm elevation of the sacred desk, or the stormy surface of the political hustings, it had an indescribable attraction for me. If I entertained any preference in the matter, I believe the fervid outpourings of religious orators were the most prized by me in the days of my boyhood.

How this taste or passion, for at one period, it really amounted to such an exaggeration of feeling, arose, I cannot tell. Certainly it was not called into existence by the weekly ministrations of the very good, but very dull preacher who officiated as pastor of the church of which my parents were then members. Child as I was,

when I used, in accordance with my beloved father's ideas of family discipline, to go unwillingly, Sunday after Sunday, to C—— Chapel, I well remember that I often felt weariness, if not disgust, while listening to Mr. H——'s heavy discourses. I can see him now, and call up again the whole chapel scene, just as it was in those days of "long ago." Mr. H—— was a large, fat man, with a red, expressionless face, a partially bald head, and very little medullary matter of any consequence beneath its highly polished surface. This lack of hair, he once, at the persuasion of his wife, I believe, attempted to supply with a "front," or fragment of a wig. The poor man used to perspire freely, and the only pleasure he ever afforded me was the unconscious displacement of this "front" by his pocket handkerchief, as he swept the latter across his moist forehead. The flock tittered, but the shepherd, with his "front" adorning one side, went on preaching until he discovered his disaster, and confusedly removing the cause of it, hurried it into his coat pocket. He never wore false hair again.

How terribly tedious were his sermons to me. The only consolation I found was in Watts's hymn book, which by stealth I consulted in my pew corner. What a joy and a relief it was when on a wet Sunday evening I was permitted to stay at home with my mother, who had a fine taste for poetry, and loved to repeat hymns to me. I see myself now sitting beside the parlor fire, on a carpet-covered footstool, whilst the flames were brightly reflected from the Dutch tiles which lined the fireplace,

and flickered on the golden pipes of the little chamber organ, that had one "barrel" of sacred tunes for Sabbath days; and on the frames of the portraits of my brothers and sisters; and listening to her soft gentle voice as she read Bible narratives, or Doddridge's hymns, (Philip Doddridge's mother used to teach her son Scripture stories from Dutch tiles, too;) or as she would tell me of Mrs. Hannah More, whom she well knew, and of Mrs. Newton, (the sister of Thomas Chatterton, the "marvellous boy" of Wordsworth) who had been her schoolmistress; and she would sing in her low pleasant voice, hymns which I now never listen to, but the days when I first heard them come back again. More than thirty years have passed since then; but neither life's storms nor calms have banished from my heart, and they never will, these home memories.

What a pleasure, too, it was to me, when occasionally my father, who was a deacon of the church, would come home from a week-evening service with the intelligence that a stranger was to preach on the following Sunday. Any change to me seemed a change for the better. I think now as I thought then, that it could not well be for the worse. At such times my delight was increased by the prospect of a personal acquaintance with the new preacher, who my father, by virtue of his office, frequently entertained at his table. Even then I was a bit of a hero worshipper; and I was thus afforded opportunities of seeing and hearing some of the notabilities of that day. As I grew older, these facilities became more frequent and were greatly prized, especially as I became

a sort of favorite with our visitors, chiefly, I believe, because I possessed a good memory, and so could readily quote the "heads" of sermons when required. For this accomplishment I used to get many an approving pat on the head from the reverend gentlemen, and I have no reason to doubt that I rose considerably in my own estimation in consequence. But there were some who used to notice me, of whose commendations, a child, or one of larger growth, might not without reason be proud.

Among these, I well remember one who now occupies a foremost station in the ranks of London preachers. This gentleman was then a young, thin, delicate, curly headed student of Divinity, with a soft, pleasant voice, and a smile that was fascination itself. At that period he could not have been more than nineteen or twenty years of age, but already he had become popular. Every week, almost, he took tea at our table; and by me his coming was looked for anxiously, and his appearance hailed with delight. He did not as our old pastor used to do, *bore* my childish mind with grave, almost dismal lectures on religion, which I could understand just enough of to be frightened by; but he gently led me by the "still waters" of piety, and charmed whilst he instructed. This was JAMES SHERMAN, now the successor of Rowland Hill, at the Surrey Chapel, Blackfriar's Road, London, and the pastor of the largest church in the British metropolis. Fully has his now more than middle age confirmed the promise of his youth. By the young he is still almost idolized, as he was in the early

part of his career. Time has thinned and streaked with grey his flowing hair, and spectacles intimate that the bright eyes are less capable of performing their visual office than of yore ; but his warm heart has lost none of its benevolent pulsations, and his watchful eye none of its looks of love.

Mr. Sherman was a prime favorite of my childhood, as he now is of my "older day." Reader of these reminiscences, should you visit London, go and hear him, and my word for it, you will not be disappointed. Hereafter, I may have to speak further of him ; at present I must go on with this half autobiographical chapter.

Time flew on. The old pastor of whom I spoke, at length tired out his hearers, so that his congregation dwindled down to a few dozen. Oh ! those dreary Sunday services, during which I used to gaze on a wilderness of deserted pews, and listen, *per force*, to the melancholy echoes of the church choir ! If I had not been kept in strict subjection, I should have run in disgust from the chapel. As it was, many were the excuses I invented for going to hear some other preacher in the city. At length the farewell sermon of Mr. H—— was preached, and I was taken to his vestry after the discourse, to bid him good-bye. Some of the women members were weeping, and I suppose some soft portion of my heart caught the infection, and I blubbered also, young hypocrite that I was, for the certainty that I should have to listen to no more dull thumpings of his ecclesiastical drum, filled my heart with delight.

It so happened that the city of Bristol, in which these scenes occurred, was more than usually fortunate at that period, in possessing great preachers. But this fact added much to my annoyance, for I well knew that whilst I was listening to prosy sermons, within a few streets' length, several of England's most gifted men, and one who was on all hands acknowledged to be the "prince of modern preachers," were delighting and edifying their hearers. That time, indeed, constituted the Augustan age of Bristol; the city was a positive reservoir of ministerial talent, and to it, as unto a centre of attraction, were drawn those who, either from feelings born of piety, or from motives of mere curiosity, desired to hear the "outpourings" of pulpit magnates.

From a volume of mine, recently published in London, I may perhaps be permitted to extract the following, which will afford some idea of those palmy days of dissent in my native city :

Men, universally acknowledged by their contemporaries to be "arbiters of taste, and masters of opinion," thought it not beneath them to resort to Broadmead Chapel, to hear the pure streams of "English, undefiled," which every Sabbath day flowed from the eloquent lips of Robert Hall. In a pew of that meeting-house, which has been rendered famous by its pastors, might often have been seen Sir James Mackintosh and Henry Brougham—Plunket, too, was a visitor there; and he declared that, until he heard Hall, the prince of preachers, he did not know what preaching really was.

Besides Hall, there were at that time other ministers

of mark; men who, though they did not shine with a brilliance equal to that of the great luminary, were not extinguished by its flood of splendor. Little disparagement is it to the present occupants of the pulpits of Bristol to assert, that the palmy days of preaching in that ancient city have passed away. An Augustan age comes not twice. Estimable and talented are the men of whom we shall presently speak; and possibly they may be more *useful* preachers than the departed worthies, so far as relates to "the million," but that the mantles of Hall and some of his contemporaries have fallen on their shoulders, no one, we imagine, will be inclined to assert.

Well do we remember Robert Hall. As we write these memorials, the living man seems to stand before us just as he appeared in the pulpit in old times. The grand and capacious forehead — bare, on its lofty summit; the sparkling, yet solemn eyes, lighted up as he gives utterance to the splendid creations of his powerful intellect; the rather short nose, the large mouth, the broad lower portion of the face, and the double chin, are vividly apparent, as is the broad and ample chest, pressed against the pulpit; and the hands — one gently raised from the Bible, the other resting on the page. The whole man, indeed, is depicted in our memory. Our ear also receives anew echoes of tones long since uttered; the weak voice, the hesitating sentences at the commencement of the sermon, the continuous flow of musical language as it proceeded, and the almost jubilant tones with which it ceased.

Another of the Bristol "celebrities" was John Foster, the well known author of the "Essays," and one of the most profound thinkers of modern times. An eminent minister recently said to us, when we introduced his name in the course of conversation—"Ah! sir, Foster was a man without a heart." We do not agree with him. A heartless man would not have written as the great Essayest wrote. A heartless man would not have shunned hollow popularity, and found his chief delight in preaching in the cottages of the poor, as Foster did. It is true, that owing to the peculiar constitution of his mind, he was prone to look at most things through gloomy media, and that his imagination was almost always morbidly tinged; but the few who knew him best, and loved him most, agree in declaring that no man possessed more generous sympathies, or kindlier impulses. Mr. Foster seldom preached in Bristol, but when he did, it was an "event." Every one went to hear him, impelled by the same sort of curiosity as that which made the literary people of eighty years since throng Mrs. Thrales's rooms, in order to hear Dr. Johnson talk. Church people and dissenters, clergymen and Methodist parsons, Unitarians and Baptists, sat side by side, presenting a rather startling spectacle, especially in a city where considerable animosity then existed between the members of different sects. The personal appearance of the preacher was singular enough; he resembled rather a country farmer, than a minister of the gospel and an eminent writer. As he mounted the pulpit stairs, you saw before you a stout personage, in an un-



mistakable wig, which the renowned Truefit never could have turned out of his establishment ; a wig, pointed at its summit, the shape of the forehead being rather pyramidal. The eyebrows were large, black, and bushy, and the eyes beneath, dark, bright, and keen. These, however, were half concealed by a pair of huge circular-rimmed silver spectacles, which rested on a long nose. From the partial absence of teeth, the mouth was somewhat retracted, but its angles had what John Keats calls, a "downward drag austere." A blue, old-fashioned coat, with huge skirts and ample pockets outside, and decorated with large brass buttons ; a black waistcoat ; drab small-clothes, and top boots, with a thickly-rolled neckcloth, completed John Foster's costume ; and, certainly, anything more unprofessional could scarcely be imagined. But all this singularity of appearance was forgotten when the great man commenced his prayer, which itself was, as a lady once observed, "one of Mr. Foster's essays which we stand up to ;" and then his sermons ! At first the text was mumbled out, and one was apt to feel something like disappointment ; but that feeling quickly passed away as the preacher proceeded. To give anything like a verbal description of Foster's style would be next to an impossibility, and, therefore, we shall not attempt the almost hopeless task.

William Thorpe was, literally and figuratively, another great Bristol preacher. Of Elephantine dimensions, he literally filled the pulpit of Castle Green. His *forte* was the exposition of mystical texts ; and on certain occasions, where time was allowed him for preparation, he

was highly impressive. He was, however, far from being an original preacher. To compensate for this, his memory, like his person, was "prodigious," and this constituted the great and unfailing bank on which he drew. Robert Hall said of him that he was a reservoir, not a fountain; and he was right. This fact renders his few published works all but valueless, there being little in them which may not be found in previously published standard works. His name lives in the affectionate remembrance of many friends; but his fame as an orator perished, when for the last time he quitted the pulpit.

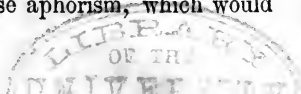
In the neighboring city of Bath, too, there was another great attraction, for a young and enthusiastic mind such as mine. There William Jay preached, and few have not heard of that remarkable man, who yet survives, the last unquenched star of the constellation of sacred orators who shone in all their brilliance twenty years ago. Very often did he visit Bristol for the purpose of preaching Anniversary Sermons, and never did I fail to hear him on such occasions. His personal appearance was very striking; but let me again quote from my London volume:

"There is something in the massive head of Mr. Jay, which reminds one, at times, of the grand old head of some ancient statue of Jupiter; it is large, and abundantly covered with silvery hair which, sweeping from one of the temples, discloses a splendid forehead. The eyes are peculiar, being dark, extremely bright and lively, and of a most searching expression. Eyebrows large,

of a darkish grey, overshadow these "windows of the soul," as some old writer has called them. The nose is short, and not classically formed, and the mouth is, if anything, a trifle too large for the connoisseur in such matters. A double chin fades imperceptibly away into a short neck, which is connected with, as we before intimated, a broad, expansive chest.

"Taken as a whole, the face is an extremely fine one; and stamped as it now is with the radiance of a good old age, few can behold it without a reverential feeling. It is capable of a great variety of expression, and so does it change with the changes of the preacher's subject, that an intelligent deaf person once told me, he "could almost understand Mr. Jay's sermon, by the mere looking at him." Deep pathos, genuine humor, sly sarcasm, biting irony, or boundless benevolence, are by turns indicated. As we sometimes behold on a hill-side, now the shifting shadows made by the clouds sailing above; and anon, behold bright patches of sunlight, where gloom had been but a moment before; so on the countenance of the subject of our sketch, the mind's varied emotions are alternately depicted, and each so imperceptibly blends with the other, that, though fully conscious of the changes, we do not discern the precise moment when those fine transitions of thought and expression occur.

"The style of Mr. Jay is one exclusively his own. He imitates no one; and no preacher whom I have ever heard, resembles him. Usually, he commences his sermons with some abrupt, terse aphorism, which would



seem to have little to do with his subject, and which sometimes, indeed, *has* nothing in connection with it. He is not rapid in his delivery, but rather the reverse; his sentences are delivered with great emphasis. His discourses may sometimes be almost called conversational, for he talks *to* people as well as *at* them. Occasionally he produces a prodigious effect by a solemn strain of eloquence, immediately following some remarks which had, spite the sanctity of the place, provoked a smile; for as in the case of Rowland Hill, he has a flow of wit which cannot always be restrained. But he never descends to buffoonery, nor profanes the pulpit by low jests. No man feels more than he does, that when in the sacred desk he stands on sacred ground. His occasional sermons are models of this kind; at such times, it is not an uncommon practice of his, to select rather peculiar texts—take for instance, his funeral sermon for Rowland Hill, when he chose as the motto of his discourse, the words ‘Howl! fir trees, for the cedar has fallen!’”

If Robert Hall was the prince, Jay is the patriarch of London preachers. “His life,” says a recent writer, “has been a most interesting one from boyhood upward, speaking constantly to the people; and now we touch his name with hallowing feelings. \* \* \* \*

He is indeed the representative of an ancient race of preachers, without the remotest pretensions to scholarship, or to extraordinary powers of thought; he belongs to the race of which Matthew Henry and Scott were the greatest expositors and leaders.”

Three years ago I heard William Jay preach in Sur-

rey Chapel before the London Missionary Society, and few passages of personal import can be more interesting than the account of his ministry which I took down in short hand as it fell from his lips. I will take the liberty of quoting it here :

“Six days ago I entered on my eighty-third year. When I first ascended these steps with trembling knees, I was not nineteen.

‘Many changes have pass’d since then ;  
Many changes I have seen ;  
Yet have been upheld till now ;  
Who could hold me up but Thou ?’

“Perhaps there are few, if any, persons here this morning who heard my first address then, from the words of the Apostle — ‘God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ I was then young and tender. The work was great, and the Lord was pleased to afford assistance, and give me very considerable acceptance. So that I remember, when I had been taking my leave of the congregation here in my farewell sermon, still the crowd remained in the chapel-yard here and refused to disperse, till I opened the parlor window and addressed them again. From that time, for half a century, I annually served this chapel for eight Sabbaths for many years, and then for six and then for four. I cannot accurately calculate, but I must have spent three hundred Sabbaths within these walls, while my sermons or services have been no less than fifteen hundred. You see, therefore, that my ministry

must have been very much affected by this place, and I feel many responsibilities, at this moment, arising from it. At length I gave up my annual assistance here, not from any dissatisfaction on either side, but from the want of some recreation and leisure which I had never enjoyed till then, and also from a conviction that my remaining extra labors should be devoted to the country, for you in London will always be rich enough ; you will always, by fair or foul means, secure all the assistance you need. I therefore devoted the remainder of my life to laboring in the country and in my own usual sphere of labor there.

“ I have borne the pastoral office for upwards of sixty years, during which time my church has been three times enlarged, and the congregation remains as large as ever.

I have preached much, especially in my younger days, in villages, where I have found great delight. I have also frequently preached, especially on public occasions, for various denominations, without offending others, or without violating my own convictions. Such is now the general accord and harmony of all the parties who hold the truth—who hold the Head (whatever may be their difference in other respects,)—that though the barriers are not yet removed, (and I do not know that it is desirable that they should be removed,) yet they have been lowered enough to enable us to see each other over them, and to shake hands together ; and there are now several little holes, through which we may pass and return, in aiding one another, in these services, and on these occasions.

“I knew many of the second generation, and some of the first generation of Methodists; and can make, therefore, a comparison between things then and things now, as to the profession, and as to the preaching, and character of the preachers now and then. I have often quoted the words of the prophet, — ‘My soul desired the first-ripe fruit.’ Oh! there was something about those early converts that was very peculiar. They were simple-hearted christians, dead to the world, but all alive in their love to God! But I am not going to deprecate the present preachers, and the present state of things. I am persuaded we have improved in some things; improved in many things. I should think myself very ungrateful if I were, on just going off the stage, to ask, ‘Why were the former days better than these?’ for I should ‘not inquire wisely concerning this matter.’

“Finally, in relation to this Institution. I attended, first, some of the private meetings for preparing a public exhibition. I was happy enough to hear and attend the first public convocation. I preached one of the first annual sermons at Tottenham Court Chapel. It is delightful to me to think, and it will encourage you to be informed, that the sermon was of good, in being the means of the conversion of one of the most worthy and valuable and excellent of men; I refer to our late friend Mr. Hyatt, who preached for your Institution, and who has always held it very near his heart. And how many sermons I have preached for it I cannot say. I have not

been a friend to the platform — God having graciously pleased to deny me that privilege.

“I hope these grey locks will excuse this little garrulity. It is not probable that I shall have another opportunity of addressing you again, at least on such a public occasion as this. I had better, therefore, take my leave of you. ‘Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.’

“‘The Lord bless you, and keep you! The Lord cause His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you! The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you, and give you His peace!’”

Rowland Hill, too, was one of the great guns of dissent in my young days ; but I only heard him once, and I am almost sorry now that I saw him at all, for the mere wreck of a preacher was presented to my view. There he sat, (after tottering up the pulpit stairs, clutching, with his bony hands, the rail, as he ascended,) in a high chair — for he was far too feeble to stand — a painful picture of drivelling senility. Yet, there was some of the old fire left, and it blazed up now and then. He was what people call “funny” by fits and starts, and it was sickening to see broad grins on the faces of people who should have known better. The good old author of the “Village Dialogues” died very shortly afterwards.

Once, during my youth, Edward Irving paid a flying



visit to Bristol. That visit constituted an era in my existence. Again I look on that extraordinary pulpit comet as it swept into my ken," blazed for a brief period and departed, leaving me in a state of wondering admiration. Once more I look on that magnificent head, whose raven locks

"Streamed, like a meteor on the troubled air;"

on those remarkable eyes, whose very obliquity added power to their expression; on that figure, which in its wild contortions reminded me of one "possessed." And those solemn tones of his voice often reverberate through the chambers of memory like a sound and warning of doom! Shall I ever forget that discourse of Irving's? Oration it might rather be called, but that word is, now-a-days, applied to such paltry speeches, that I have grown sick of using it. No one now blows his political or polemical penny trumpet, without fancying that Cicero's instrument was made for him to play upon. Oration, indeed! I know not which most to be surprised at, the vapid nonsense, so styled by the blustering Boanerges of our time; the matchless impudence of the individuals who pour it into the public ear; or the astounding "swallow" of the listeners to such "sound and fury — signifying nothing."

So much by way of introduction; and now let me address myself more particularly to the design I have formed with respect to this series of articles. And here, at the very commencement of my task, an attempt to portray, in pen and ink, something both of the men and the minds of persons who occupy prominent pulpit

positions, I may be met by the inquiry — “And pray, by what right do you assume to yourself the office of critic?” or, “Do you think it proper or prudent to visit a church for the purpose of sketching the minister?” I reply that public men are public property, and amenable to fair criticism; — none other shall I write. I hate flippant and vulgar personalities as much as any one, but I contend that I have as much right to comment on a minister’s style, manner, and characteristics, as he has to address his observations to my heart and conscience. Believing that the pulpit of a country in no mean degree represents the condition of its mental and moral society, may I not say a word upon it; upon the men who fill it; upon its influence and its destinies? I shall take care to say nought that may with cause offend, or hurt the feeling of any; but at the same time I shall speak candidly and truthfully, fearlessly and frankly of all.

With every disposition to speak respectfully of the pulpit in this age, I may say that I by no means intend to distribute my praise equally over all the pulpit teachers; for some, indeed, I can feel but a small measure of respect. The whole of the worth of the pulpit is jeopardized by the conduct of men who strangely forget the character of modern intelligence, and the width and depth of modern information; the supercilious sneer, the currish, barking, dogmatic tone of some, is known to all of us; men there are who fancy that their being set apart to a sacred office, is a diploma and warranty for the treatment of all persons not in the ministry, with

dogmatism and disrespect. Then we have elegant lack-adaisycalness, — oh, how many a head more remarkable for the hair upon it, than for the brains within it! How few have felt the glorious agonizing determination to speak the words of truth to their fellow men at all hazards. It is not too much to say that vanity, that idleness, that the idea of a life of literary elegance, have frequently more to do with the selection of the pulpit for a profession, than the convictions of the littleness of Time, and the vastness of Eternity!

It has often struck me, and doubtless other persons too, that congregations have distinct characteristics, as well as their ministers. Audiences frequently reflect the character of the preacher; the preacher reflects his audience. Therefore, shall I have something now and then to say of the people who listen, as well as of the persons who preach. Seated in some snug corner, wrapped in my venerable claret-colored coat, I shall take many a note.

“And faith! I’ll print it;” but I will do so good-humoredly at all events, so that, in case of a “find-fault,” even the sometimes proverbial sensitiveness of the “choir” shall not be unduly irritated. Such little matters as these will be mere accessories of the “Pen-Pictures,” which being now about to be hung in the great gallery of public opinion, must patiently abide criticism, and trust only to their truthfulness for commendation.

## CHAPTER II.

PICTURE-MAKING AND WORD-SKETCHING. A LITERARY PARTY. DEPARTED FRIENDS. A SLIGHT MISTAKE. THE REV. MR. STOCKTON, OF PHILADELPHIA. NOTICES OF WM. DAWSON AND ROBERT NEWTON.

WHENEVER that great painter, Sir Joshua Reynolds, drew a portrait, it was always his endeavor to produce a *picture* also. That is, not content with a mere likeness, which would be a source of delight to those only who were acquainted with the original; he desired to produce a composition, which by the aid of judicious accessories, should make it artistically as well as personally valuable.

In humble imitation of so illustrious an example, I shall, in this series of sketches, whenever practicable, introduce "accessories," in order to heighten the effect, yet not so as to damage accuracy of outline or breadth of touch. Nor will this be a difficult matter;—on the contrary it will marvellously lighten my labor, as well as constitute an improvement when it is completed; but I shall not resort to the stale artistic device of inserting in one corner of my canvas the fragment of a graceful pillar that shows an imaginary support for the lady or gentleman who never in his or her life leaned against

such an one, or of filling up the other with a glaring crimson curtain, edged with bullion fringe and looped with cord and tassel. My adjuncts will be copied, as well as my principal subjects, "from the life," and therefore it is to be hoped that a harmonious combination will be the result.

During a brief residence, some ten years since, in the city of Philadelphia, whilst spending an evening with my accomplished friend, the late William Peter, himself an elegant scholar and a profound critic, the subject of clerical poetry was broached. Professor Walter, who was present, (as also was John C. Neal, the "Charcoal Sketcher,") contended that clergymen very seldom produced poetry of a high order, and ascribed it to the cramping influence of collegiate training. On the contrary, Mr. Peter urged that some of the greatest poets were divines, and instanced Croly and Cary, the translator of Dante. Feeling inclined to side with Walter, I introduced the name of that literary charlatan, the Rev. Robert Montgomery, as a set-off to those who had been just mentioned by Mr. Peter. It would be useless now to say aught of the good humored controversy which followed, and I have only alluded to it because it proved the means of my first hearing of the principal subject of the present chapter. It was Neal, I believe, who asked me whether I had heard Dr. Bethune preach, or had read his poems? To both preacher and poet I was a stranger, but from what was said during that evening, I resolved before long to be ignorant of Dr. Bethune in neither capacity.

And here I may say, *en passant*, that of that pleasant party of four, three have passed "from sunshine to the sunless land." Over the grave of the quaint little "Charcoal Sketcher" the grass has long waived. Walter, (who more resembled Charles Lamb than any man I ever saw or heard of,) after a life of labor and toil, but ill-rewarded I fear, "sleeps well;" and Peter, full of years and honors, broods over German mysticisms no longer. But ten years and, as old Defoe has it: "only I alive." Truly, as well as eloquently, did Burke write:—"What shadows we are, and what shadows we pursue!"

On Sunday morning, therefore, soon after this literary meeting at Mr. Peter's, I set out from my hotel for the purpose of hearing Dr. Bethune. "Man proposes, but God disposes," and it was fated that I should be baulked in my oratorical aim for that morning, at least. Now any one, who has first visited Philadelphia, must have experienced, as I frequently did, the utmost difficulty in steering his way through its "distractingly regular" streets. Laid out, as they are in squares, the thoroughfares intersecting each other at regular distances, every place is so much like every other place, that it becomes a matter of no small difficulty to distinguish one from the other. Of course on the Sabbath day the puzzle would be all the greater, inasmuch as open shops would not serve as land-marks. For some time I strolled on, and at last seeing a large church, which I took to be Dr. Bethune's, inquired of a passer by if such were the case or not. The person questioned was a Quaker.

“Straight before thee,” was the reply, and following a string of church-goers, like myself, in I went.

This appeal to the Quaker’s topographical knowledge, and the curtness of his information, reminds me of another inquiry which I made of some members of that sect. Anxious to see the grave of Benjamin Franklin, I sought for the church-yard in which his remains were interred. Having reason to believe that I was in its neighborhood, I opened the glass door of a bookseller’s store, and walked in for the purpose of inquiring as to the particular locality of which I was in search. In the middle of the store stood three friends, who seemed to suspend their conversation at my approach. They were, to all appearance, the very straitest of their sect,—wearing drab hats, drab coats, drab vests, drab small-clothes, and drab gaiters. Very lean and lank were they, and each face looked as though every spark of feeling and passion had been drilled out of its owner at some very remote period of the past, and it was almost impossible to believe that they ever could have been boys. Possibly I might, with characteristic impatience, have disturbed the decorum of the store by entering too hurriedly. Be that as it may, I was saluted with a blank stare of mingled curiosity and wonder. Had I been the ghost of the old Lightning-Compeller himself, I do not think I could have been received with more frigid stateliness; nor had I suddenly burst into the burial-chamber of King Cheops, and encountered the fixed eyes of that mumified inhabitant of the pyramid, should I have felt more chilled.

“I should be obliged to you,” I said, “if you would inform me how I could gain admission to the church-yard where Franklin lies.”

Not a word was vouchsafed in reply, and there I stood, whilst the three “friends” stared at me so intently that I do not think there was a square inch of clothing upon me which they could not have sworn — I beg pardon — affirmed to. And for five minutes at least did I endure their silent curiosity. To add to my embarrassment, the young man behind the counter stared also, and all four seemed astonished beyond measure at my presumption. I have since thought that my calling the burial-ground a *church-yard*, as we are used to do in England, petrified them; but this must forever remain a mystery. The upshot of it was, that after waiting in vain full five minutes for a polite reply to a polite question, I turned on my heel in something like a pet, and left that place of starched propriety. Since then I have travelled wide and far in America, and save in this instance I have never met with anything but the utmost courtesy, even when my many inquiries might have not unreasonably caused impatience, if not irritation.

Scarcely had I fairly seated myself in a pew before a minister entered the pulpit, and the organist commenced the usual voluntary. Now, as the personal appearance of this gentleman differed widely from the ideal that I had formed, from the description of my friends before mentioned, of Dr. Bethune, I began to think that I had unwittingly visited some other church than the one I set out in quest of. And such indeed proved to



be the case. As, however, I hold it to be a monstrous piece of ill-breeding, as well as a gross insult to a minister, to say nothing of the slight to the minister's master, to leave a pew, when once in it, because my taste may not be exactly suited, I settled myself comfortably down, and found no reason whatever to regret the error which had brought me there.

A hymn was very finely sung, and then the minister rose to pray. He was tall, and of a spare figure. The face was long, the forehead well developed, and its summit began to show where the touch of Time had thinned the now grizzling hair. The eyes were large, light colored and very grave in their expression; indeed they conveyed their character of sedateness to the whole face. The cheeks were hollow, the nose and mouth large, and the chin long. A small collar was turned down over a black silk neckerchief, and a suit of plainly made black completed the costume. This was the Rev. Mr. Stockton, the pastor of the Methodist church in which I was worshipping.

The principal characteristic of Mr. Stockton's preaching was deep solemnity. Whatever he said, came directly from his heart, and so commonly went straight to those of his hearers. His voice was sonorous and deep, and he managed its inflections with great tact. I remember that he once produced a great impression by taking the Bible in his hands, after a fine apostrophe to its multifarious contents, and in low, deep tones, alluding to those who seldom perused its inspired pages, twice repeated the words, "Oh! this neglected book! Oh! this

neglected book!" These sounds sank deep into every heart—at least they did into mine. Very slow in his delivery, there was nevertheless more thought in one of Mr. Stockton's sermons than in many another minister's copious discourse. His action was subdued, but graceful. There was no flash—no clap-trap—no straining after effect. The source of his power was in his utter simplicity and sincerity; for he alike seemed to avoid an exhibition of the learning of the schools, or the graces of finished oratory.

A very striking contrast did Mr. Stockton's quiet, simple preaching present, to the discourses of an eccentric English Wesleyan Methodist minister, who I had heard not long before, and of whom, in accordance with my expressed design of here and there introducing notices of British Divines, I shall now give a brief sketch.

The last English preacher of genuine Methodism—the last who from the conference pulpit spoke in the strain of the old time, was William Dawson; or, as he was familiarly termed, "Billy," or "Farmer Dawson," for he ploughed as well as preached. He could give but little spiritual aliment, but most wonderfully could he rouse the slumbering convictions of the soul. Coarse and intolerant, he was fitted to cleanse rocky hearts; unless we commit ourselves altogether to the superiority of the system which implies the superior force of gentle words, dropping like the still rain, or quiet snow, and penetrating like them the most arid soils and substances. Dawson truly spoke in thunder—literally in thunder—

the terrors of the Lord ever gleamed round the pulpit in which he spoke ; — he had but two words, but he uttered them in a wonderful variety of cadences — “ *Repent or be Damned.*” His was a style strange and eccentric in the highest degree ; and when he preached, strong convulsions rocked alike the pulpit and the pew.

As a specimen of his manner, I will refer to a sermon which he was fond of preaching ; it was from the text, “The Lord shut him in.” But first let me give the reader some idea of his personal appearance. He was a short, stout man, with an iron frame, and a spare, massive, red, hard-featured face. No grim old puritan could look grimmer than he. His head was covered with an old brown “scratch” wig. On his shoulders and back hung a wretchedly fitting coat of blue, with brass buttons. A common farmer’s vest and knee-breeches, with top boots, completed his outer man ; and as he walked up the chapel aisle he firmly grasped a sturdy cudgel, which he would deposit at the stair-foot. Nothing would be more unprofessional than his appearance ; but that rough-looking man would attract thousands, from miles around, whenever he preached, and none went from his ministrations unsatisfied.

After announcing the text I have named, in the pulpit, the first movement of the preacher was from it, “This,” he said, “wont do.” He went down the pulpit stairs, and standing in the large table, or class-leader’s pew, he supposed himself to be Noah, the pulpit to be the ark which he is building, and his hearers around him to be the ungodly world to which he was preaching.

Meantime he was preparing the ark, and while talking he was gradually mounting step by step, the pulpit, till at last he reached the door; then slamming it to, he shouted, "The Lord shut him in." And now the flood, the thunder, the lightning, the fall of rocks and crags, and the shrieking of perishing sinners rose around, while the ark drifted safely over the billows, amidst the terrors of fire and thunder and storm. As in most preachers of his class, there was a rough, histrionic power; his words and his actions too were most graphic. There was a strange sermon from the text, "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit," etc., etc. The colloquy between the preacher, and some person he supposed to be beneath the pulpit, down in the miry clay, is often spoken of, by those who heard it, as a singular illustration of his power of graphic painting, and something like ventriloquial speech.

The tale is well known in Yorkshire, Dawson's native county, of the pedlar, who, when Dawson was preaching from the text, "Thou art weighed in the balance and art found wanting;" pressed through the crowd, up the pulpit stairs, and gave up his measure. "Break it, sir," said he, "break it, it was short;" and to his imagination and conscience, all the sermon seemed levelled at him. My dear reader, all this may appear very coarse to you; but, in fact, is not such preaching as that of Dawson's or that of Father Taylor's or Elder Knapp's, sometimes useful? Are you to scale, intellectual and refined though you be, other men's requirements by yours? Forcible preaching to you may drop most life-

lessly upon other ears. I confess I should not like to attend upon a ministry such as William Dawson's very long, and yet I wish that there were among our country preachers or ministers at large, strong, coarse, rugged, pictorial souls like his, to awaken the moral Choctaws of the country to some dim twinkling religious perceptions. Many of my readers will remember that one of the most famous Methodist preachers of the day visited America a few years since. Admitting his great popularity, I am disposed to ask whether the pulpit of Methodism is at present most appropriately represented in England by ROBERT NEWTON? Certainly I think not, and yet his name is most attractive in all parts of Great Britain; and I have gone with thronging crowds to the largest conventicles in the country to hear him. I have heard him on great occasions and on small occasions, and I cannot understand it; there is something mythical about the man; he is the most famous preacher in the world—so say his admirers. I have read his sermons, I have heard them delivered; and I do not remember that I have ever been benefited by a single new thought, new illustration, or new impulse. Once, indeed, I heard him say, that "prayer was like an arrow, shot up to heaven; it brought back a blessing upon the quiver." The figure appeared to me not of the best, but still good; and as it was the only one, I took it and was thankful. But turning over Bishop Hall's contemplation six months after, I found the arrow there. The only good thing I ever had from the Doctor was borrowed. There is nothing ill-natured in these remarks;

the fame of Robert Newton is extraordinary in America as well as in England. I suppose, humble writer that I am, I must be wrong ; two hemispheres cannot be at fault, and there are men whose presence is their power. Whitefield cannot be seen in his sermons, wonderful as was their effect in delivery. We read them as among the tamest of human compositions. Again I say I cannot understand it ; thought or language I never could detect ; truly, truly among the hundreds of obscure preachers of my acquaintance, I know very many in moral structure apparently far taller than Robert Newton.

But his manner, says the reader — what do you think of his manner ? Excellent, very ; and in some particulars, perhaps, even graceful. No doubt in youth and manhood there was a perfect and self-possessed dignity, which wins wonderfully in popular estimation. No doubt the tones of that voice were then thrilling and shrill, and yet in wonderful combination full of compass and power. I surmise all this, for I have not heard it ; but a friend of mine, a clergyman from Louisiana, who heard him preach in one of the Halls of Congress, during his visit to this land, declared to me that those tones were so marvellous and electrical, that when the preacher gave out the hymn—

“ Would Jesus have the sinner die ? ”

he felt a tingling and creeping through the blood of his whole frame ; and many of the writer's friends have attested this wonderful power. If this is the case, there

is nothing marvellous in the extent of the preacher's fame; this magnetic force touches the highest point of oratorical power; but I have neither felt it nor heard it. I said so once to a good friend, and he told me that my heart was not in a right state; very likely.

But where have I been rambling? The reader must pardon me for being discursive. This pen of mine is addicted to a species of literary vagrancy, and at some seasons it wanders wide and far. So has it been in the present instance. I set out with the full intention of visiting Dr. Bethune's Dutch Reformed Church, instead of which I have lingered among the followers of John Wesley. Patience, however, reader, and in my next chapter I promise you that I will take more heed unto my thoughts, that my pen slip not from its appointed subject.

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### CHAPTER III.

PEN-PICTURES IN PROVIDENCE. SCENES AT BROWN UNIVERSITY. PRESIDENT WAYLAND. DR. CASWELL. A SCENE IN CHURCH.

MORE fortunate was I in my next attempt to reach Dr. Bethune's church. What church it was I do not precisely remember; that is, the special name or number

thereof. It belonged, I know, to the Dutch Reform section of worshippers.

There I frequently heard him preach then and afterwards, for he was not one of those pulpit teachers whom you may just listen to, and then leave without feeling any more interest in them. Hundreds of such are there whose words glide from the mind and memory, leaving a blank behind; or, as a very homely preacher once said, "it runs off like water from a duck's back." Such men are my peculiar aversion; and it demands the utmost stretch of courtesy to sit out one of their dreamy discourses.

Since my Philadelphia visit, Dr. Bethune has removed to Brooklyn; and as I wish to sketch the men of the day, rather than those of ten years ago, I shall not pencil Dr. Bethune as he appeared in the city of brotherly love, but rather as the Brooklyn pastor. This, however, will make very little difference, for I do not see that either his personal appearance or his pulpit efforts have undergone any material alterations. He may, perhaps, exhibit a trifle more of what Leigh Hunt calls "a comfortable fulness," than of yore; but on the whole, the man now is, as I said, so much like what he then was, that one picture will serve to represent him at both periods.

With the permission then, of the reader, I will shift the scene from Philadelphia to a neighborhood nearer Boston, and this because such a change will enable me to introduce some of those "accessories" of which I spoke in the commencement of my last chapter. Let



the reader, then, in imagination, transport himself to Rhode Island State; for in its commercial emporium, Providence, we shall have a fair opportunity of witnessing a great annual gathering of the "cloth," and amongst the host of reverend visitors, Dr. Bethune himself, that gentleman having engaged to deliver the oration to the *Phi Beta Kappa* Society of Brown University.

Here we are then, in the hot city of Roger Williams, his far-famed and immortal exclamation of "What cheer!" staring us in the face, it being carved in stone on the front of the Exchange building. Bustling as the town always is, it is unusually so to-day, and more than half the population are on wheels. Never have I seen, and I have been in not a few towns and cities in my time, such a host of vehicles as is exhibited daily in the streets of Providence. And this speciality of the town stands us just now in good stead, for as we draw up panting and perspiring by the market, a friend hails us from the interior of his chaise, and we are borne, nothing loth, up one of the tremendously steep streets that lead to the University. Arrived there, we leap on the grass and join the crowds who are assembled in front of the portico.

As yet the doors are unopened, so we shall arm-in-arm with our "guide, philosopher and friend," for such he indeed is, lounge about the pleasant lawn of Brown's. Brown's? not a very high sounding name is it for a seat of learning. Now there is something sonorous and euphonious too in "Harvard," it has an aristocratic sort

of sound, and let people say what they will, there is much in a name. Does not "Plantagenet," (noblest of appellations,) fall more imposingly on the ear than "Tims?" Are not the diapasons of "Northumberland," or "Washington," of a nobler tone than the everlasting pitch-pipe of "Jones?" "Princeton," too, sounds well, and "Yale" has a quaint, puritanish echo, that redeems it from insignificance. A wild and desperate attempt has been made at Washington to redeem the Institute there from the universalism of the tribe of Smith, or Smithson; but as in the case of some tailor-disguised nobody,

You may spangle and dress up the man if you will,  
But the stamp of the vulgar will stick to him still.

And Brown's! what on earth is the name suggestive of save of the "Smith, Brown, Jones and Robinson" story that made us afraid to go a-swimming in our school-boy days? Stay—we are wrong. Was there not a Sir Thomas Brown, whose "Vulgar Erroures" convince us of our own? Then there was the famous John Brown, of Haddington, and other Browns, spelt with a final *e* and an *u* for a *w*, of whom doubtless our learned readers wot. And here is *our* Brown—Humphrey we believe was his given name, who has immortalized his individual self by his legacy to learning. Little matter is it, either that "Brown University" does not sound quite so grandly as Oxford, or Cambridge, or Edinburgh, or Göttingen, or Leyden, or Salamanca, or the Propaganda; it is enough that it possesses sound teachers, and that it

has sent forth able scholars, who may worthily stand beside the best of those who have matriculated in the halls of any of its rivals.

A great day is that of the College winding-up in the city of Providence, but not so great, we are told, as it was a few years ago. This was ascribed to an alteration in the time of its celebration. As it is, however, an unusual stir prevails. Here on the greensward are groups of gentlemen engaged in exchanging greetings, for many of them, old students of Brown's, have repaired hither to see old and to make new friends. A practised eye can scarcely fail to detect the comers from the country, by the freshness of their faces and the cut of their clothes. Every other man we see is a parson (we like the old fashioned epithet—parson) of some denomination or other. Some of these are so venerable that the grasshopper would indeed seem to be a burden. Some are middle aged, sleek and pompous; some so suave and shrinking in the awful presence of the great men of their sect, that they continually remind us of the bashful and apologetical young divine of whom Robert Hall said he was surprised that he did not beg pardon of the Almighty for being in the world. Some are so very humble that we are reminded of

—————"The devil's darling sin,  
The pride that apes humility;"

though we by no means desire to impute the possession of that quality to any one in particular;—some, too, are young, florid and foppish, and a few even juvenile,

clumsy and verdant. But whether young, middle aged or old, they each and all have a peculiarity of appearance and manner which is unmistakable. All sport a "white choke," all are attired in sable, all have a grave look, (excepting when some racy story or pleasant bit of *scan. mag.* is being told, and then none can be "jollier" than our reverend friends,) and in short, the stamp Parsonic is to be seen upon the physiognomies and figures of each and all.

Ten o'clock strikes, and the great hall doors are flung open. With others, we enter the library, where are assembled the "dons" of the place. And now let me resume the familiar "I" once more.

It was no time to examine the legion of volumes that surrounded me, though I longed to do so. Hurried along by my guide, I reached the top of the library, where stood a few gentlemen, apparently awaiting the arrival of some important personage. Presently a gentleman made his appearance from one of the side recesses. As he came forward he drew on his robes, and that operation completed he entered into desultory conversation with a few present.

"Do you know President Wayland?" asked my friend. I did not; and he introduced me at once to the head of "Brown." And never have I beheld a man of a more imposing presence, or one whose appearance was better calculated to inspire reverence—I had almost said awe. He was in stature a little above the middle height, but with that slight stoop peculiar to nearly all men of studious habits—the true scholar's

bend. His figure was square built and massive ; nothing of the slenderness of the hard student was to be seen in his frame, nor of the paleness of the deep thinker in his swarthy face. His head was one which a sculptor might have taken as a model for Jupiter ; and nothing more statuesque have I ever seen than the position he assumed when he bowed a recognition of me, when introduced. It was the bend majestic—the grandest bow possible ; it made you feel that you stood before one who knew his place, and meant to keep it too. As he thus slightly inclined, his face was necessarily brought into near neighborhood with mine, and the dark piercing eyes gleaming out from beneath bushy black brows, which in their turn were surmounted by a broad forehead and on whose summit was iron gray hair, almost startled me. Firm and compressed were the lips, somewhat large the nasal organ. Altogether, I felt convinced that the majestic bower was a man of mark, and I was not mistaken.

I soon backed out of the crowd which formed around the great man. Next I was introduced to Dr. Sharp, whose silver hair gleamed like a crown of honor amidst the black multitude. Presently I was made acquainted with Professor Caswell, whose genial face gladdened all who came within the sphere of its influence. Other acquaintances, too, I made that day, of which I may have occasion to speak hereafter ; for the present I must hasten to join the procession which is about to proceed to the First Baptist Church.

A band heads it ; and to the roll of the drums, the

blare of trumpets, the clang of cymbals, the reedy notes of hautboys, the liquid melody of flutes, and the grumbling of bassoons, the grave and reverend professors and their friends march churchwards. The motley procession

“Like a wounded snake drags its slow length along,”

and at length, emerging on Main street, soon reaches the gates of the First Church, whose steeple glistens in the sunlight, white as an angel's wing. Here the members of it dispose themselves into two parallel lines, between which the Professor and the Orator march, whilst hats are lifted from all heads as they pass, in token of respect. Following in their wake I entered the church, in which I soon secured a good place both for seeing and hearing.

A beautiful interior is that of the First Baptist Church in Providence. Seldom have I seen anything so truly elegant. Its lofty roof, fine pillars, chastely decorated walls, beautiful pulpit and deep galleries, all contributed to form a splendid temple. But, dear reader, imagine that, as now, the galleries are filled with ladies, most of them lovely and all well dressed. Viewed from my seat, the *coup d'œil* was superb. From end to end of those side galleries there was not a vacant spot. No flower garden was ever more densely covered with beauty. Below were principally sober black coats, but the light gauzy dresses of the ladies, and the bright, many-colored ribbons in their caps and bonnets, pleasantly relieved the dulness of the divinity color. And

these chapel-going ladies, let me assure you, reader, are quite as fond of making purchases at Vanity Fair, as any of their unprofessing sisters. Show me one of the fair disciples even of plain John Wesley, whose eyes will not glisten at sight of a "dove of a ribbon," or a "duck of a bonnet," or who will conscientiously prefer a "dowdy" head-covering to a smart fabric from a fashionable bonnet-builder, and then I will believe that religion has a tendency to damage or destroy taste, but not till then.

There is an organ in the gallery, yet to-day it is not used. Instead there is a brass band present, and it sounds strangely to hear "lillibullero" sort of tunes from such instruments, and in such a place. However, the ladies seemed specially pleased at the substitution of profane polkas for pious psalm tunes, and I more than once heard tiny feet tapping the time with great gusto. And no great harm either. Rowland Hill introduced song compositions into his chapel, and declared that the devil ought not to have all the pretty tunes. He was right.

These preliminary services have been gone through, and now the orator of the day advances to the front of the pulpit. In an instant a dead silence reigns, and even the silks and crinoline of the ladies cease to rustle. Let us too glance at the "observed of all observers."

## CHAPTER IV.

THE REV. DR. BETHUNE, OF BROOKLYN, N. Y. PERSONAL APPEARANCE. STYLE OF ORATORY. EXTEMPORANEOUS PREACHING. CROLY. DR. BETHUNE AS AN AUTHOR. NOTICE OF DR. SHARP.

RISING from his seat—a black covered manuscript in his hands, there he stands, and so let him for a few moments, whilst the reporters are sharpening their pencils, the people settling down into their places, and his sketcher “all eye, all ear.”

Externally, Dr. George W. Bethune is of the portly order, and in respect of adipose matter forms a very striking contrast to the reverend gentleman upon whom, the reader will remember, I accidentally stumbled in Philadelphia. He was none of your meditative and ascetic looking men, such for instance, as was in appearance the late Moses Stuart, who, when I saw him in his neat old study at Andover, looked as thin and as dry as any of the “Fathers” on his shelves. No, the Doctor rather reminded me of that sleek and oily gentleman, Friar Tuck, whose very name is suggestive of venison pasties, and “dainty bits of warden pie.” Neither did he at all provoke remembrances of certain hard working Curates. Far from it; he was of the



British Bishop order — that sort of bishop I meant who used to hold a fat diocese, and dispense divinity in lawn sleeves. Mind, I speak only of externals, for I believe that very few of the ecclesiastics to whom I refer were so far as mental endowments or usefulness were concerned, at all comparable with our orator of the Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. Bethune's face possesses a shrewd but certainly not a highly intellectual expression — it is too fleshy for that. The forehead is broad, but not high; and on its summit the long, light colored straight hair is parted in the centre and combed back behind the ears. The eyes are of a grayish or blueish tint, and rather small. The nose is short, and the mouth large — too large indeed for symmetry, and the plump cheeks are whiskerless. After what was just now said, the reader will be prepared for a double chin, a considerable amplitude of waistcoat, and for a stomach like that which Shakspeare described as "capon lined." Altogether, on surveying the Doctor, you would at once pronounce him to be "something out of the common," whilst his unaffected and off-hand manner would convince you that no one was farther removed from any thing like the consciousness thereof, or of affectation of any kind, than himself.

Dr. Bethune's oratory is chaste, poetical and glowing. A ripe scholar, his sermons are always models of style; and without too much elaboration they possess exquisite finish. Some of his discourses remind us of a polished shaft crowned with its graceful capital of carved acanthus leaves, symmetry, elegance and firmness, all com-

bining to form a perfect whole. If they do not exhibit the profound thought that characterizes the sermons of a Hall or a Boardman, they exhibit the flowers of oratory in all their beauty and glory. His command of language is great, — he at times displays even an affluence of diction, and an opulence of imagery. A shrewd observer of men and manners, he is fond of shooting folly as it flies, and when it so pleases him he can be as sarcastic as John Randolph, or as severe as Tristram Burgess. The “shams” of the day are his abhorrence, and he fearlessly attacks them. No man has higher respect for the “powers that be,” but no minister “holds his own” so independently, or with more dignity sustains his sacred office. His descriptive passages remind us somewhat of the verbal grandeurs of Croly, the author of “The Angel of the World,” and the Rector of St. Stephen’s, Walbrook, London. The last time I heard that distinguished English Divine, his subject was one which led him to refer incidentally to the splendors of Ancient Nineveh, the city whose long buried glories have since been revealed by Layard. Certainly such a magnificent specimen of word-painting I never before heard. Listening to him was like reading scenes from his own gorgeous, eloquent “Salathiel,” or perusing the Apocalypse by flashes of lightning! With a marvellous pomp of language he described the glories of the now ruined cities, and with amazing fluency heaped splendor on splendor, until, as the eye grows dazzled by gazing on the changing glories of a tropic sunset, when clouds of amber and vermilion, piled on each other, assume a

thousand fantastic shapes ; so the mind became almost overwhelmed by his many and superb illustrations. Thus is it sometimes in the case of Dr. Bethune. Occasionally he over-colors his pulpit pictures, so that in place, as it were, of the delicious harmony of a Claude, we now and then behold the extravagant gorgeousness with which Turner used to cover his canvas.

Dr. Bethune well supports the dignity of the pulpit. He appears to feel that it is no place for trumpery show, or idle display. He commands respect as well by his manner as his matter. He uses but little action, and that is always graceful—as graceful indeed as it can be, when we remember that he confines himself to his notes. Did he preach extemporaneously he would be far more effective. Alas ! for written discourses,—what they gain in correctness, they lose in warmth. When will ministers fling their manuscripts away and trust to the inspiration of the moment ? There is to me something supremely ridiculous in a man's clutching the leaves of his sermon book with one hand, for fear he should lose his place, whilst with the other he is frantically beating empty air ! It is like a bird with a lame wing, or a race horse with a fettered hoof. I question whether Wesley or Whitefield would have produced a tithe of the effect they did, had they *read* their sermons. It is a pedantic, mind-cramping, inspiration-destroying practice, and the less we have of it the better. For my own part, I would rather hear the humblest preacher “out of book,” than the most admired minister who is tied to his written lines. Some folks may sneer at my

taste, perhaps — let them. I do not of course advocate *unstudied* sermons, for I take it to be an insult to any congregation for a minister to go into the pulpit unprepared. What I deprecate is, the dull, dry system of reading, and often of badly reading, a coldly correct composition — a consequence of which is, that there is seldom a spark of genuine feeling elicited from the time the text is announced until a final “Amen” closes the dreary discourse.

Dr. Bethune is an author. Scattered among hymn books and annuals we find some very charming verses from his pen.

Beside poems, Dr. Bethune has made some valuable contributions to literature, both in theological and scientific paths. His orations and occasional discourses, says one of his reviewers, show that “he is a man of large and generous views, uniting to the attainments of the scholar a profound knowledge of mankind. In discourses prepared for public occasions, it is almost impossible that allusions, more or less direct, and more or less connected with the occasion — to the institutions, the policy, the legislation of the country, and the duties of its citizens — should not often occur. Dr. Bethune’s political philosophy is liberal and enlightened; it is the uncompromising application of Christian morality to public life, and there is no nobler and truer political philosophy than this. One of the most remarkable discourses in this volume is that entitled ‘The Claims of our Country on its Literary Men.’ We could wish that it might be read attentively by all those in our country

who devote themselves to letters, whether in the retirement of our academic institutions, or in the hours snatched from other pursuits. Its wise counsels are expressed in a manly style, and sometimes with eloquence."

The Doctor is the author of the introduction to Walton and Cotton's Angler, which is prefixed to the best American edition of that charming work, and few are able to "whip the water" with more success than the pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church in Brooklyn. In this "contemplative man's recreation," as good, quaint old Izaak hath it, he is not, in my opinion, overstepping the proprieties of parson-hood, for were not Peter and James and Simon fishermen? Some caviller may say, "Aye, but *they* were piscatorial for a *living*." No matter, we think Dr. Bethune may preach all the better for an occasional ramble by the running brooks, for such souls as his can find "good in every thing." Doubtless he has studied many a sermon with a rod and reel in hand, and quite as useful ones as if they had been painfully composed with some of the musty old fathers on one side of him, and a heap of dusty Commentators on the other. As I have intimated, Dr. Bethune is the pastor of a Dutch Reformed Church, in Brooklyn, N. Y. The edifice is new and handsome, and the congregation rather fashionable, I believe, but of such matters I know little and care less.

\* \* \* \* \*

In my last chapter, I incidentally alluded to the Rev.

Dr. Sharp, of Boston, who, I said, was one of the noticeables of the throng in the library of Brown University. That revered minister of Christ is no more; and the grave at Mount Auburn has closed over all that was mortal of the father of Boston ministers. I am not now about to sketch this eminent and excellent man. To nearly all my readers, that small, spare figure, with the closely buttoned-up-coat, that head of silver whiteness, that benevolent brow, those small, cleanly cut eyelids, and blueish orbs beneath, that lengthened nose, that kind, flexible mouth, and indeed the whole external man, must be as familiar as any thing else of yesterday. Truly did Dr. Wayland say of him, on the occasion of his funeral discourse, (and with the extract I will conclude this chapter): —

“There was scarcely ever a character which stood so little in need of delineation, for it was broad and open as the day. His intellect was clear and practical; the bias of his mind was strongly conservative; as a preacher his elocution was solemn, earnest and impressive. Cowper’s portrait of a Christian minister seemed to be continually before his mind. His style was natural, perspicuous and forcible. He rarely failed to hold to the last the fixed attention of his audience. The ancients had said that the charm of oratory was in the elements of the character of the orator. Most true was this of Dr. Sharp. Forty years had he labored here, and not a shadow of a spot had passed across his character. He seemed surrounded by a moral atmosphere, which transformed the minds of other men into his own character.”

## CHAPTER V.

SABBATH MORNING. A COSMOPOLITAN CREED. REV. MR. MINER'S CHURCH. PIETY AND POLITENESS. FLORAL DECORATION. A SKETCH OF THE PREACHER AND THE SERVICE.

It is Sabbath morning. Early sunbeams are slanting through the screen of flowers and foliage that adorn my window, my city window, and outspread on a table lie three volumes: THE BOOK, Jeremy Taylor's works, and Herbert's poems. Gentle showers have fallen during the night, but now

“—— Heaven is clear,  
And all the clouds are gone!”

so that we may well exclaim,

“Sweet day so clear, so calm, so bright!  
The bridal of the earth and sky!”

A Sabbatic stillness hangs over the very streets, which is only now and then broken by the sound of the “church-going bell,” and that harmonizes with rather than disturbs the scene. Little children troop by toward school, their “twinkling feet,” making soft music as they go. I am not ashamed to own that the “bonnie wee things”

are especial favorites of mine. A tiny tap of the door elicits the customary "come in," and the "neat-handed Phillis" of our little realm of a room, enters with the claret-colored coat well brushed, and boots with "shining morning" surface. And now a visitor arrives, a friend with whom we have engaged to visit some church in Boston, and which of them is the most important matter to be settled.

As we stroll leisurely beneath the trees of the Common, through the over-arching boughs of which streams sunshine that paves, as it were, flickering mosaic, the grass below ; and the massive grandeur of whose shade relieves heaven's glare of blue overhead, my friend (who, by the way, is a church-member) ingeniously tries to draw me out, and satisfy himself as to my own private and particular religious opinions.

So as he quietly and almost carelessly asks, "And to what denomination may you yourself happen to belong?"

I stop suddenly in my walk, look him full in the face, and reply, "To none."

He looks at me with surprise, and, I fancy, with disapprobation ; we silently resume our stroll.

"To *all*, I should rather say," I added, "for I desire to survey every man's creed with respect. In my faith I am thoroughly Cosmopolitan. My maxim is to pay that respect to the religious notions of others, which I desire they should concede to my own. I might just as well quarrel with a man for having a different nose from



mine, as for his embracing opposite theological tenets. Pope was not far wrong when he said,

“For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,  
He can’t be wrong whose *life* is in the right.”

My companion shook his head ; it was evident that he did not consider Pope orthodox. I proceeded : —

“Sir,” I said, “there is nothing I detest so much as exclusiveness in religion, or, in other words, bigotry — call it which you will. For my own part I could worship among (though not *with*) *any* sect “professing and calling themselves christians.” Nay, sir, I would go farther, I indeed have done so. I am not ashamed to confess that I have felt devotional in a Mohammedan mosque, a Jew’s synagogue, a Romish cathedral, and a Quaker meeting-house, (perhaps the least so in the latter.) And why should it be otherwise ? To my mind, a conscientious Hindoo who believes in his shaster ; acts according to the light given him ; and dies in that belief, ignorant of the atonement, is as likely to be happy hereafter, as the bishop of this or that, who also walks uprightly in the sunshine of his own faith. There is a positive and a negative unbelief, but we regard this too little, and are apt to set ourselves up as models of perfection.”

“But,” remarked my friend, rather shocked, I fear, “do you not think it advisable to identify yourself with *some* one sect. Surely there must exist bodies of christians, some with whom you could feel yourself at home ; and if you wish excitement there are ——”

“Stay, stay,” said I. “That is just what I do *not* want. It is a great fault of the day that audiences to a great extent would have all their thinking done for them; or they would have the speaker to conduct them through a perfect series of spasms and excitements. It is the sad feature of men, in this age, that they cannot endure silence, and quiet, and spiritual rest and peace: the railway whistle is heard through the very temple itself—the shout of the engine is even in the house of the Lord! the fault is not all the pulpit’s. To many, even, there is no life but in storm; they have no notion of a kingdom of God coming without observation. My heart has bled for many an amiable, beautiful, gentle spirit, wedded to its thoughts and books, unable to cope with the active energies of the times; the prey of ferocious deacons and grumbling persons. Oh, those deacons, those tribunes of the congregations—many, many instances have I known where the instructor of the people has been wholly subverted by a jealous spirit, a thirsting for authority, a yearning for something new.”

“Are you not too severe upon the worshippers in our temples?” asked my companion.

“Not a whit,” I went on to say, “not a particle. The truth, indeed, is, that the worship of the Divine occupies too often, even here in Boston, but a small portion of the temple duty, (as, reader, in the course of these articles I shall prove.) It is frequently a sacrifice to genius, if it is there; to eloquence, to thought, if they are there; the ancient idea of the temple was sacrifice to God! Is it so? Thus the pulpit has

changed its posture, and very vital is the change. I shall not say all that I think is involved in it, but I will affirm that the pulpit never stood before in so ambiguous a position. The pulpit, what is it? With Theodore Parker it is a lecturer's desk; with Archbishop Hughes it is a sacrificial altar; with some enthusiastic sectarian it is the Agora of the priesthood; with crowds it is the last refuge of morbid vanity; it has been an element—it is an element of modern society. What do you say it is?"

But my friend had grown impatient, as perhaps the reader has done, and he replied by simply pointing to the clock of Park street church, opposite which we had arrived. I took the hint and accelerated my pace towards School street, down which we turned and speedily arrived at the Universalist church, whose new front might have escaped my observation, had I not heard from within the singing of children, that sweetly floated on the summer calm; and observed groups of individuals gathered round the open doors, through which went many a family procession to the house of prayer.

Now I have some hobbies, such as most elderly gentlemen are generally supposed to cherish, and one of them is to look upon the fair young faces of children, and to hear their artless strains. Treason against taste it may be considered by some, but I would rather listen to a chorus of infant voices than to the trills and tra la's of the most accomplished of Prima Donnas; and as to loveliness, why, not all the highly dressed ladies in the "Book of Beauty," who are represented in the glories

of satin and simper, can for one moment compare with romping groups of little girls, whose blooming faces are

“Like any fair lake that the breeze is upon,  
When it breaks into dimples and laughs in the sun.”

Such being my *penchant*, then, it will not be wondered at that I followed the sound I have alluded to. Not far had I to go, for just within the church doors I saw another door, now flung aside, and in the apartment beyond beheld a Sabbath school. This, then, was the human bouquet from which the incense of song had ascended, and reverently taking off my hat, I passed just within the entrance.

Over that portion of the school-room assigned to the Superintendent, hung a large, three quarter length portrait, in a gold frame. It evidently occupied the place of honor, and I endeavored to find some one who might inform me who was the original of the painting. It was the semblance, I was sure, of a “tabernacle,” in which had dwelt a beautiful and lovely spirit; and as I looked on the canvas, I fancied that the eyes beamed with affectionate regard on the young people who thronged the basement.

But the low, melodious tones of an organ in the church overhead, reminded me that the service was shortly to commence. So ascending the short flight of stairs, I arrived at the inner doors of the School street sanctuary. But before I reached the top, I became aware that my progress was scrutinized by a regular battery of eyes belonging to a number of young men

who leaned over the railing of the lobby. If I had been a lady I might possibly have blushed at being thus stared at, as some whom I noticed actually did; but thank goodness, I am not too sensitive in this respect. However, the custom is one which I think would be more honored in the breach than the observance, for to my perhaps antiquated notions, it is not exactly the thing for a crowd of men to post themselves in a position from whence they may as they lounge, criticise (sometimes aloud) the persons and dresses of every lady who is compelled to run the gauntlet of their gaze. Beside this, the conversation on such occasions (for the custom is by no means peculiar to this particular place) sometimes smacks rather of the exchange than of the church; and it is but a few Sabbaths since that I heard a knot of gentlemen in the lobby of another place of worship, very glibly discussing some subject with which dollars would seem to have more to do than divinity, the former being frequently mentioned loud enough for an unintentional listener to hear, and the connection which proved that ecclesiastical revenues were not the "cash accounts" under consideration. Had I been the preacher that morning, I fancy I should have put aside any other discourse which I might have prepared, and extemporized one from that portion of scripture in which the "money-changers" in the Temple of old are rather severely alluded to.

Now some people may indignantly toss their heads at these good humored strictures, and say that it is by no means an improper thing for friends to meet friends and

form pleasant re-unions in such places. But, I ask, are "friendly greetings" the only things exchanged at these times? Very different is it from the rural, time-honored custom which obtains in certain country communities, where, before and after service, the village people linger in the church-yard to greet their pastor as he goes to, or quits the ancient edifice. In these simple gatherings even children seek "to catch the good man's smile." And then, it is a salutary thing for rustic congregations to linger in the village burial ground, where lie the "rude forefathers of the hamlet." In such places

"Forth issuing from the house of God,  
And pausing on their homeward walk,  
Of those who sleep beneath the sod  
The village people talk ;

Of youth gone down ; — of beauty lost ;  
Of energy and strength departed ;  
Of passion stilled ; of project crossed ;  
Of mourner broken-hearted."

Very often, indeed, more powerful sermons than those delivered in the pulpit are preached "to simple hearts" in such places, when the minister freely mingles with his flock,

"And as a bird each fond endearment tries  
To tempt its new fledged offspring to the skies,  
He checks each haste, — reproves each dull delay,  
Allures to brighter worlds and leads the way."

But I am growing garrulous ; — so let me be silent and enter the gates into this temple built with hands.

For a few moments I stood in the aisle. Some ladies, strangers, like myself, waited also, until they could be accommodated. Of course they were attended to first, and this no one but a brute would grumble about. But there *did* happen a trifling matter, which somewhat disturbed my habitual serenity, that I shall briefly refer to.

I was politely shown to a pew, in which were four other gentlemen. Not long had I been seated, when two ladies made their appearance, and instead of their quietly sitting next the door, they paused, and us four men were compelled to walk in single file out of the pew, arrange ourselves awkwardly along the aisle, to the confusion of those who wished to pass by, and then follow the ladies, Indian file fashion again, as they marched at the head of our little procession. Now this was all very absurd, and as a matter of homage to *the* sex, ridiculous. It was not quite so bad, though, as being turned out of a seat which I had occupied for half an hour previously to service commencing, at another church, a few Sabbaths since, by a gentleman who roughly demanded it for a lady, which lady flounced into it without the slightest recognition of the courtesy accorded to her. Now I trust I am as polite as my neighbors, and I cannot but admire the deference universally paid to ladies in America; but I fancy when the attentions of gentlemen are, as is often the case, received with a scornful stiffness, instead of with a trifling acknowledgment, that the custom stands in danger of wearing threadbare. Besides, men do not like — at

least I do not — being defrauded of a pleasant smile, or a cheerful glance. So let the ladies look to it, if they would have the men continue to be pinks of politeness. I do not mean mere bowing, smirking and simpering things, who treat women as if they were dolls, and are consequently despised by them; but men who, whilst they willingly concede all that politeness demands, will not yield one iota of their own proper and personal dignity.

From the organ, as I before intimated, is pealing forth a soft, low strain, fitly preluding the services which are to follow. Oh! most magnificent of musical instruments! to some peculiarly constituted hearts, what a handmaid art thou to devotion! How, as the soft diapacons steal over the sense, do they, with their exquisite pathos, attune the heart to love and tenderness; and how does the exultant spirit rise above time and death, when jubilant anthems echo and reverberate beneath fretted roofs and along pillared aisles. Stand, reader, in some venerable cathedral, and while the harmonious thunder rolls along, you will feel as though soaring to heaven and endless life. Suddenly the music ceases; then the heart too drops; and though all around are carved monuments and sculptured brass, it perceives, spite of the greatness in vaults beneath, only a prouder burial ground, a place of darkness and a skull!

The interior of the School street church is one vastly to my liking. It is not so large as to distract the eye by an extensive area, nor so small as to appear mean or insignificant. Perhaps for the purposes of meditation,



places of worship of a moderate size are to be preferred. Go to the Bodleian, or to any other great library, and, surrounded by the mighty host of books, study with any great advantage if you can,—at all events, I never could; but, retire into a snug apartment, and there you may easily concentrate your ideas. So in churches, you may be more entirely devotional, I think, in the cloister of a cathedral than in the vast fabric itself.

In the church I am speaking of, the usual arrangement exists. A gallery runs round three sides of an oblong, the fourth being occupied by a fine rosewood pulpit, decorated with Norman arches on its front. Behind it are two arches and an alcove painted in fresco—an imitation marble tablet being displayed beneath each of the former, on which are respectively inscribed in letters of gold—

“GOD OUR FATHER.”

“CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR.”

Opposite the pulpit is an organ in a white, slightly ornamented case, with gilded pipes. The ceiling is neatly decorated, and looks much better than some I have noticed, on which designs like cart wheels enormously magnified, are displayed. I can think of no more apposite simile. The walls are tinted with a delicate hue; and through the buff-colored venetian blinds, and diamonded ground glass panes, streams a mellow light, which may be styled the “dim religious.” The pews are commodiously disposed, well cushioned, and lined with purple, figured stuff, that harmonizes well with surrounding objects. There, reader, you have a pen and

ink description of the interior of the School street church, as nearly accurate, at least, as I can give it.

While the voluntary was being played, an official entered, bearing a tastefully wrought basket filled with bright flowers in his hand. This, somewhat to my surprise, he placed on the table in front of the pulpit. Presently he again made his appearance, and this time with a pair of vases, also filled with flowers gracefully arranged, which were placed one on either side of the basket aforesaid. A third time came the flower-bearer, and now the pulpit itself was adorned with buds and blossoms. Happening a few minutes afterwards to turn my head in the direction of the choir, I noticed that a pair of vases of flowers stood in front of the organ, and carrying my investigations a little farther, to my surprise I beheld quite a novel and pretty arrangement, by means of which every gas bracket was converted into a bouquet holder. Between each pair of burners was a bunch of flowers. This I confess rather puzzled me, for I had never seen a Protestant church so adorned before. The effect was, to me, as novel as it was beautiful. I was speculating as to whether floral decorations was a usual thing in that church, a conjecture to which the glass bouquet holders aforesaid gave some color of probability, when my friend whispered in my ear, "We are close on the Fourth of July;" and so fully accounted for the presence of the flowers. It did me good to see them in such a place. Mrs. Hemans, I think it is, who says or sings —

"Bring flowers, bright flowers, to the house of prayer,  
They are nature's offerings; their place is there;"

And she was right. What more graceful than such adornments? Some straight-laced people, to whom I spoke of these flowers, condemned their appearance in a house of God, and muttered something about "Popish custom." Bah! it makes one sick to hear such miserable stuff from mortal lips. Why, I'd not only have flowers, but pictures too — aye, and sculpture; art, indeed, in all its diviner forms. How absurd for some people to groan out, (not sing) as I have heard them,

"Religion never was designed  
To make our pleasures less,"

to the most melancholy of tunes, thus by their doleful practice belying the precept on their tongues. No — no. The temple of the Deity should be like a certain gate we read of in the New Testament, called "Beautiful," and what more fitted to adorn it than the "lilies of the field," or the productions of that genius which he bestows on earth's favored few?"

The minister of the church has taken his place in the pulpit, and, rising, offers up a prefatory prayer. Then he selects a hymn which carries us back to our boyhood days, when we used to sit in our little chair by the side of its authoress, Hannah More. Many a hymn did that venerable woman teach us years and years ago, and pleasant are our remembrances of "Barley Wood," her residence. Elsewhere have we sketched our recollections of Mrs. More, and so breathing a blessing on her memory, we sit down.

The choir is not a large one — four singers only standing up. It is, however, very effective — the ladies having remarkably sweet and flexible tones, and the gentlemen — especially one Lablache-ish personage, with curling locks — possessing musical and well-trained voices. The congregation stand facing the choir, but do not chime in, so that the two ladies and the brace of gentlemen, with the organist, monopolize the music. Some other time I shall have something to say about this exclusiveness of vocalism. At present my fast filling up space warns me to curb my pen.

A chapter is next read, and the minister offers up another prayer. It breathes the very air of devotion. Oh! to think of the offensive addresses we sometimes hear addressed to the Almighty! Some men actually converse with the Deity instead of praying to him, and bawl as though “the still small voice” was not as audible to the Creator as the crash of echoing thunder. Here there was nothing to disturb, but everything to tone the mind to a devotional and holy calm. Softly as rose the perfume of the flowers around, streamed upward the incense of praise and prayer from that pulpit altar. A sense of the awful presence in which he stood — of the nothingness of self — of the dignity of his function, and a simplicity of manner marked the efforts of the pastor, and

“That holy calm within the breast,

A pure, sweet pledge of perfect rest,”

was communicated to all who listened. Then another

hymn was sung, and the preacher arose to commence his discourse.

But let me, ere I allude to his sermon, endeavor to sketch the personal appearance of the reverend gentleman who is to deliver it; though this is the less necessary, as a very fine and faithful lithographic likeness of our preacher has been published. Nevertheless, as there may be many at a distance who are strangers alike to both portrait and original, I will do my best to give some idea of the Rev. A. A. MINER.

Mr. Miner is tall, well proportioned, and of a decidedly attractive appearance, both in the pulpit and out of it. There are some men whose countenances at once enlist you in their favor, and his is one of them. Look, for instance, on the serene, placid and lovely (if such an expression may be applied to a man's face, and why should it not be?) countenance of Bishop Heber, and doubt if you can that it belonged to a lovable and loving spirit. Then again there is James Sherman, of Surrey Chapel, London, whose face is the very index of benevolence and piety; and Baptist Noel, with whose appearance all are familiar. To a class of faces of this kind belongs Mr. Miner's features. The head is finely shaped; over the high, broad expanse of forehead is dark brown hair, not in masses, but simply and unaffectedly disposed, and rather revealing the fine forehead than adorning or concealing it. Very gentle and soft are the eyes in their expression;—they are eyes into whose depths you may gaze with the certainty that they are wells of thought and feeling. Aquiline is the nose—

something of the shape of Southey's, but not quite so prominent ; indeed the mouth and the whole countenance reminded us much of the Laureate, as we saw him not very long before his death, at the house of his old friend, Joseph Cottle, who also has just departed to join his early and beloved friends, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and others "of lesser note." Mr. Miner's complexion is not exactly pallid, nor of that "interesting" trait termed "delicate;" it is what may, perhaps, be best described by the "pale cast of *thought*." The cast of the entire countenance is uncommonly pleasing, and indicative of the fine mind which regulates its varied expression. When in repose, it is full of a calm dignity ; but as certain sculptured urns only display the graceful designs on their surface, when lighted up from within, so the countenance of our preacher, when his heart is excited by feeling and emotion, reveals aspects unknown and unseen before. And one great charm connected with Mr. Miner's pulpit appearance is, the utter absence of anything like affectation which characterizes him. All is simple, natural, and therefore effective. The fastidious Cowper might have approved of it. Of all affectations, that of the pulpit is the most contemptible, and we have more than once quitted in disgust churches where the preacher either flourished his bordered bit of inspiration lawn, as did Robert ("Satan") Montgomery, when last we heard him ; or simpered out contemptible puerilities to the fashionable folks, who in well cushioned, velveted pews, lounged luxuriously, as they, in the words of the rubric, pronounced themselves to be "miserable sinners."

Mr. Miner's style of pulpit-oratory is eminently attractive. His voice is distinct, well modulated and melodious. Accustomed as I had been of late to *read* sermons, it was no small relief to me to discover that though Mr. Miner had notes before him, he scarcely did more than occasionally refer to them. To all intents and purposes, his discourse was extemporaneous. And how much more forcible was it on that very account. It was evident that his oratory was not the result of effort, for no man that I ever heard revealed more plainly than he, how much more he felt and saw than he was able to utter ; his eye revealed it. His sermon was illuminated by its delivery. He spoke, as it seemed to me, wholly without art ; he never sought to inflame or to enrapture ; in speaking, in fact, he sought to do nothing, but just talked on—and while talking, it seemed to you as if words and ideas happened to fall in that strange beauty of combination, almost without volition on the part of the preacher. The mention of some topics seemed instantly to transport him, and doubtless he might describe with enrapturing fervor the progress of a spirit through future ages, in knowledge and wisdom ; he could describe a cherub winged upon his mission through the infinite spheres. It seemed as if figures crowded on him, and he apparently felt the difficulty of selection. What can I better say to describe his fluency and the felicity of his illustrations, but that language flowed from his lips as music flies from the string ? Sometimes his sentences are laden with gold, and at others even touching in their pathos.

During this particular sermon, Mr. Miner paid a graceful tribute to the memory of the late Dr. Sharp; and this struck us more forcibly inasmuch as it was tendered by a minister of one of the most liberal to another of one of the most particular of sects. In the course of the morning too, he quoted from Bailey's "Festus," and recommended to the young the perusal of "James Mountjoy, or, I've been thinking," which ought to be a capital advertisement of that tale. Sundry aphorisms, also, were scattered through the discourse, such as "Toleration must be intolerant to intolerance, else toleration becomes intolerance." But I must forbear, and close this sketch of Mr. Miner by quoting what I once said of a "kindred spirit" of the English pulpit. "Estimable and excellent! may he long occupy his position,—a position which he dignifies by his talents, and adorns with his virtues."

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## CHAPTER VI.

COPP'S HILL. MONUMENTAL MOCKERY. SALEM STREET CHURCH. THE REV. EDWARD BEECHER, D. D.

LET people say what they please about the beauty of cemeteries, for my part, I far prefer a stroll through the avenues or irregular paths of some ancient burying



ground. Sanitary measures left out of the question, the old places where the "rude fathers of the *city* sleep," with their mouldering monuments and frail records of scarcely more enduring love, the ancient places of sepulture are superior in many respects. Here, in this old city Golgotha, for instance, this "Copp's Hill," as it is called, how much is there to inform and how much more to suggest. With the Sabbath calm over and around, and the hum of the city subdued, we wander among the ancient graves, at one moment deciphering some half-worn out inscription, and in the next gazing on the grim emblems of mortality which adorn (?) many a head stone. What strange notions the old tombstone sculptors must have had of angels, if these effigies—mere heads and wings—embraced their conceptions of one portion of the heavenly host. And yet, after all, I am not sure whether I would not rather look on them, noseless and time-battered as many of them are, than on the more ambitious attempts of some of our cemetery monument makers. At least, these are free from the vice of affectation, and that cannot be said of not a few of the ambitious marbles of Mount Auburn. All trickeries of art are to be deprecated, but more especially those which would seek to mock the decaying dust below. There are, to be sure, a few appropriate emblems of modern origin. Such as a broken shaft, and the like; but these have become so stereotyped, and are sometimes so inappropriate to the character and circumstances of the persons they profess to symbolize, that they lose all their charm. It was only the other day that I saw a fractional shaft, with a broken

rose-bud on its pedestal, crowning the grave of a lady of the ripe age of sixty-nine. Rather a venerable rose-bud that, methought. And then the graven and gilded trash which now-a-days is displayed on tomb-stones, how unfavorably does it compare with the simple and touching tributes that we meet with in humble burying-grounds. Marble guns, words "dyed in blood," and all the pomp and circumstance of war, are not things to decorate the narrow house ; neither are cables, ships firing broadsides, and mutilated mariners, fitting embellishments of the last home of mortality. Flowers, if 'you like, reader, "a crown for the brow of the early dead," or a garland for the form of reverend age, for they are themselves glorious symbols of the "resurrection and the life;" but away with all the insignia of pride from that place, where, if on any spot beneath the skies, humility should reign supreme.

So tempting had been the early morning, that I had hastily quitted books and breakfast for the purpose of open air meditation ; and my almost unheeded footsteps had guided me, by pure chance, to Copp's Hill, a fitting place for a Sabbath morning's reverie,—a great open book, on whose solemn pages the history of mankind was legibly written, and divided into but two chapters—BIRTH and DEATH ! A few solitary folks, like myself, were sauntering along the avenues ; several aged persons rested on the flat stones, and now and then a little child—"what should *it* know of death?"—toddled among the grass and plucked wild flowers. All was peaceful and serene ; but suddenly, as I lingered there, the sound of a church-going bell, or rather the iron

tongues of a multitude of such, rang out their harmonious invitations to church ; and from one tower came floating on the wind the chiming tones of the " Old Hundreth." Then there was a brief pause, and another tune was played on the same bells, which agreeably varied the monotonous tolling from other steeples. Quitting the venerable place of graves, I soon reached the settled termination of my tour — Salem street.

SALEM ! How musical is the sound of many of the Hebrew words. Take the name of the Holy City, for example ; why, the melody of the syllables is perfect — JERUSALEM ! Can anything be more harmonious to the ear than that name, when uttered by a pleasant voice ? It seems to run into music of its own accord. And Salem ! — city or abode of Peace ! — the complete or perfect city, — what a beautiful name for some retired place, where the scream of the railway whistle has never been heard. But we question the propriety of calling a business street, in a great commercial city, by such an appellation. From what little I know of it, I should say that it was anything but a " place of peace." Like the other Salem, it has towers, but they are by no means " shining ;" and as for " golden glories," there be none. The only " golden" objects that I could discern were certain balls which here and there decorated the shops of pawn-brokers, who display pretty profusely the arms of the old Lombards in this particular locality.

Following the stream of humanity which is flowing along the rather narrow sidewalks, I came to Salem street church, of which the Rev. Edward Beecher is pas-

tor. Like his venerable father, the well known pioneer of the temperance cause, he is a Doctor of Divinity ; — it need scarcely be added that he is the brother of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, and that he belongs to a family of clergymen. “ A Beecher,” and “ a minister,” are almost synonymous terms ; so much so that should we in our wanderings behold a sign-board on which is inscribed “ Beecher, Grocer,” or “ Beecher, Apothecary,” we may rub our eyes under the impression that our optics deceive us, and that the eternal “ fitness of things” is, after all, a fiction.

A very interesting article might be written, — and may have been, for ought I know, — on the BEECHER family — certainly one of the most remarkable household groups, even in these United States, where whole families of celebrities, such as the “ Hutchinson family,” and others, are by no means uncommon. In other parts of the world, extraordinary talent commonly characterizes but one member of the domestic community, — for one wise son there are usually half a dozen blockheads ; but the New World has, among its other novelties, regular “ hives” of smart boys and girls. The boy Jabez, with his jack-knife, whittles his way into celebrity with a dozen of the family at his heels, — not as in poor Old England, where one favored child commonly flings all the rest into the shade. Verily, this is a great country, and conspicuous among its great guns is, as I have intimated, the Beecher family. Of its distinguished trunk, and of its New York branch, I may have occasion hereafter to speak, therefore I shall not diverge for the purpose of

more directly alluding to them in this place ; so let the reader accompany me as I enter Salem street church.

The edifice is situated at the corner of Salem and North Bennett streets, and is built of brick. It has a swelled front, and is surmounted by a turret, which, architecturally regarded, is much too heavy. It has, on the whole, a sombre appearance, and presents a striking contrast to some of the exceedingly neat ecclesiastical structures that are to be seen in various other parts of the city. Four pastors have occupied its pulpit, viz : — Rev. Justin Edwards, D. D. ; Rev. George Blagden, D. D. ; Rev. Joshua H. Towne ; which latter divine was succeeded on the 13th of March, 1844, by the present pastor, Dr. Edward Beecher.

But there goes the present minister down the aisle ; and as he takes his seat in the sacred desk, carelessly wiping his palms with his handkerchief, which handkerchief is afterwards passed over the high and shining forehead, the organ peals forth a voluntary.

It is seldom enough that I pay compliments, especially to performers of music ; for it has become so much a matter of course to exalt to the seventh heaven of excellence every one who decently draws a bow, or touches a key, that persons of undoubted genius are naturally apt to despise the approbation that is awarded with so little discrimination. Nevertheless, I feel desirous of rendering my tribute of praise to the organist of Salem street chapel, who is a fine performer on his noble instrument. Perhaps this compliment (if such it be) may lose none of its value, when I add, that, though I have listened to

the marvellous extemporaneous efforts of the late Felix Mendelsshohn Bartholdy, and to the wonderful execution and almost inspiration of the finest of living organists, Dr. Charles Wesley, yet the playing of the organist at Dr. Beecher's church suggested no "odious" comparisons. What the gentleman's name may be I know not, but whoever he is, he might acquit himself creditably as organist of any cathedral in Christendom.

Had I not been aware of the name of the preacher, I should, I think, have at once recognized the Beecher face; the mouth, especially, being extremely characteristic of the tribe to which it belongs. Dr. Edward Beecher has a fine Wordsworthian sort of head; a high forehead, broadest at its upper portion, and partially bald on the summit. The crown of the head, too, is thinned of its hair. The locks that yet remain are crisp and curling, and are, as Southey said of his own,

"—————half way  
On the road from grizzle to gray."

Below the expansive forehead are a pair of large, liquid, bluish gray eyes, calm in their repose, yet with a lurking humor playing among their coats and lenses that does not destroy their seriousness. The nose is large and well chiselled; the mouth a trifle too large for symmetry. As for the general appearance of our preacher, it is merely necessary to remark that there is a sort of free-and-easy-ness about both dress and manners which sufficiently indicate that he scorns anything like ministerial foppery. In this respect, he somewhat reminded us

of another great thinker — (for, reader, we may at once say that Dr. Edward Beecher *is* a great thinker) — John Foster, though the Boston minister does not carry his disregard of conventionalities to quite so great an extent as did the Essayist of Bristol. Neither of them, however, could have belonged to a race of men — and such there are — who fancy that their piety is in proportion to their dirt. Many of our students and others have a trick of abstraction and vacancy; we sometimes meet with interesting greenhorn youths, with a sleek, footman-looking, whitey-brown appearance about them; moral mulattoes, determined to impress you with the idea of their profound obliviousness to all around them, while you, unfortunately, found them oblivious only of their own vanity. Of such creatures we think not, when we refer to those who are not ambitious of always looking as though they had just come out of a band-box.

To return to Foster, of whom we said Dr. Edward Beecher somewhat reminded us, in this matter of etiquette. Our present subject, however, would never walk four miles, as we have known “glorious John” do, in a gray old ink-stained study-gown, and trudge up into the pulpit of a crowded chapel in ignorance of his condition and dress. It may be that such entire abstraction is not desirable. In manner, a very great difference exists (or existed for the one part) between these two men. Foster had a careless, slouching gait; Beecher has quite a nonchalantic air. Foster in his abstraction was utterly regardless of life; he seemed sometimes to cut the last mooring, and sail away through the pure seas of thought.

Beecher, we dare say, never does this ; his abstraction is seldom entire. Look at the shock head of Foster ; a tangled mass of hair, combed into propriety with brambles — very different to the fine, open brow of Beecher, surrounded with short, iron gray locks ; yet both heads are the heads of profound men ; indeed, of philosophers.

Two things give currency to the fame of a popular orator ; either the possession of a mannerism, an idiosyncrasy of appearance, voice, gesture, stamping *that* man in his talking as one altogether unlike any other, or the utterance of words altogether beyond count, compared with the number of ideas. Now Dr. Beecher professes neither of these fortunate peculiarities ; he has his manner, but is neither gaudy, nor meretricious, nor noisy, nor eccentric. His voice does sometimes rise, and the author of "Crayon Sketches," in his notice of him, says : "He often seems to attempt to work up his feelings to a pitch of intense excitement. Under such circumstances, there will be noise without eloquence, extreme gesture without extreme unction. In that way he exchanges the sublime for the sledge hammer style." It has not fallen to my lot to witness such Boanergic efforts ; but it would be strange, indeed, if in a Beecher there was not occasional outbursts.

Dr. Beecher is seldom wordy ; not often is it that he uses a word too much ; you seldom feel that another word could have better served the purpose of *that* one, *never*, unless the speaker has been hurried along, as he sometimes is, by a more impulsive and impetuous motion than that which characterizes his ordinary style. Of few



preachers may it be more emphatically said, that words represent things ; and therefore, those who want mere words can never feel much satisfaction in attending Salem street church ; but those to whom words are the sheathing of ideas — the shell which must be cracked to disclose the kernel — will find, perhaps, every sermon wealthy ; suggestive in the highest degree. The work is not all done for you when the sermon is over ; you may beat out from the “nuggets” of the shining ore, thoughts for a lifetime.

Dr. Edward Beecher does not confine himself closely to his notes. Occasionally with one hand buried in the folds of his vest, he extemporizes fluently, and *then* we like him best. Untrammelled by the written page, his thoughts take a bolder and a wider flight ; and then it is remarkable to notice how his eyes kindle, and his face becomes the index of his mind. From his discourses a volume of pithy sayings might be selected, such as “History is the judgment seat of the world,” and the like. The series of lectures on Church History, which he is now delivering on Sabbath mornings, are *unique*, and supply a blank which has long existed, for hitherto we have failed to recognize the importance of a general and popular history of the church. Truly did the preacher say in his opening lecture, that it is the central and most important subject of God’s Book of Providence.

We believe it is universally admitted that Dr. Edward Beecher ranks among the most profound divines of the day. His opinions, in all matters connected with his sacred office, possess great weight with his ministerial

brethren as well as with the laity, and if he is not so popular with the multitude as his brother Henry, his reputation rests perhaps on a more durable foundation. He is one of the editors of *The Congregationalist*, a first class religious newspaper, to whose columns he frequently contributes articles pregnant with power. In common with his family he is a stout advocate of the Temperance cause. At one time he was, I believe, President of a western College. At present he undoubtedly stands in the first rank of American preachers and theologians.

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## CHAPTER VII.

BROOKLYN, ANCIENT AND MODERN. ITS CHURCHES. A WORD OR TWO ON CHURCH ARCHITECTURE AS IT IS AND AS IT SHOULD BE. DR. COX'S CHURCH. SKETCH OF THE PREACHER. HIS STYLE. HIS DEFEAT OF THE MORMONS. ANECDOTE OF WM. JAY.

A PLEASANT place is the suburban city of Brooklyn, with its tree-bordered streets, its spacious avenues, its "Heights" commanding a charming prospect of river, bay, and the countless host of buildings in the great mart opposite. Pleasant, too, is the quiet which reigns

within its borders; doubly so, from the contrast which the saunterer in streets, named after "willow," or "chestnut," finds after the brief ferry-voyage from the noisy thoroughfares of New York. Indeed some portions of Brooklyn remain to this day almost as still as they were in the days when Sarah Rapelye, the first white child, was born on Long Island, some two hundred and twenty-eight years ago. But how changed, taken altogether, is the scene! A writer in *Harper's Magazine*, speaking of the growth of this city, says: "The hills around were called *Breucklen* (broken land) by the Dutch, and the orthoepy has but little changed, now that a beautiful city covers their slopes and crowns their summits, and the Dutch language is no more heard."

Perhaps there is no feature of this charming city which so forcibly strikes a stranger, as the multitude of churches that are here to be met with. Scarcely a street is there in which you may not find at least one. Sometimes three or four cluster together, and, seen from a little distance, spires and towers appear almost as numerous as the dwelling houses. "The City of Churches" it has well been named, but it is only of late years that it has attained to such ecclesiastical dignity. In the year 1811, Brooklyn contained but three churches, the worshippers in which were chiefly from the adjacent farms. In the Brooklyn of eighteen hundred and fifty-three, there is scarcely a religious sect (and their name is legion) which has not there its own particular place of worship.

Many of these are very beautiful. It is, however, a

great pity that church architects in this country do not study a little more profoundly the principles of their art. It would be extremely difficult, I fancy, for any one, even though he were as well skilled in such matters as the late Welby Pugin, or Mr. Ruskin, the gifted author of the "Seven Lamps of Architecture," to refer some of these Brooklyn churches to any known order of architecture.

The Tuscan Doric — Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite, are so inextricably blended with the Gothic, Saracenic, Moorish, Mediæval, Grecian, and I know not how many more styles, that a complete brick and mortar or sandstone *olla podrida* is the result. I have seen a Gothic door, a Norman window, Corinthian pillars and portico, and Doric pilasters, all mixed up in the same structure! And then the monstrous turrets, or towers, and steeples which stand glittering in the sun — wretched monuments of the bad taste, or rather lack of it, in the persons who designed them. Luckily, a better time seems to be at hand, for here and there we see indications of the striving after a purity and unity of style which shows that much as the public taste has been vitiated, it is not altogether destroyed.

The church in which Dr. Cox officiates exhibits much of this decided improvement. It is situated in one of the chief streets of the city — Henry street, if my memory serves me rightly, and high above the houses around soars its brown tower. It is in the Gothic style, which, few will doubt, is that most fitted for ecclesiastical edifices. And one great advantage over all other

styles it has, namely, that it is as well suited to a church of small dimensions as to a mighty cathedral. Seldom, however, except in the architecture of the middle ages, do we meet with pure specimens of it; for in most modern erections, the florid, middle-age, and the simple Gothic are generally blended, or rather jumbled. In the particular church now under consideration, the "florid" predominates to a fault, so that what is gained in polish and elaborate carving, is lost in force. The severity of simplicity is entirely destroyed by too great a profusion of corbel, bracket and mullion.

But the greatest fault in American Gothic churches is to be found in their painted windows. These, in most instances, are, as works of art, ridiculous, and as ornaments, singularly inappropriate. Instead of the judicious arrangement of color, so that a soft and chastened tone may be produced, how often does it happen that we see great flaring, vulgar shawl-patterns on the windows. Painted windows, indeed? why, they bear about the same relation to the artistic glories of some old European windows, that a flaunting and rouged female does to a rosy and unsophisticated belle of the village. The secret is, there is too much of a love for the showy — the mere gaudy, and until that *penchant* for glitter and gaud is banished, there will not be any reform in this matter — nay, though there should be a Chrystal Palace in every city with its imported splendors to rebuke it.

But here I am within Dr. Cox's church; not seated, though, but standing humbly in the aisle awaiting the stranger's turn. And long enough I wait, too, though

I perceive many a vacant seat. However, a friendly eye at last beholds me, and quickly am I comfortably placed.

The church is judiciously lighted,—not too much glare, but a soft, “dim religious light” hangs over and around every object. The pews, doors, etc., are either of some dark wood, or well painted in imitation thereof. The pulpit is extremely handsome, being most elaborately carved and quite novel in its form, partaking somewhat of the “screen” shape. Every aisle was carpeted, every pew comfortably cushioned; and as I sat I could not but think how different it was with the Pilgrim Fathers, when, years and years ago, on the “wild New England shore,” they first worshipped God amid the perils of the unknown wilderness. Whether modern accommodations go hand in hand with a greater profusion of piety, is a question I cannot answer. Two young gentlemen who were reading that morning’s edition of the *Herald*, and conversing loud enough for me to hear them two seats off, seemed to imply that the moderns are not quite so strict in their church etiquette as were the gray old gentlemen just referred to. I should like to know how they would have served a young fellow who was discovered whilst reading anything besides a Bible or a Psalm-Book during “meeting” time.

After the usual preliminary services—singing, reading, and prayer, the minister of the place advanced to the front of his highly ornamented pulpit. He certainly, in his plain dress and primitive appearance, afforded a strong contrast to its Gothic adornments. Dr. Cox is,

Zaccheus-like, of low stature, about the height, in fact, of the late Dr. Sharp, and, like that departed worthy, he holds a very prominent position in the christian church. His form is, however, more fully developed, though it cannot be called "fleshy," than that of the Boston divine. The head and face are full of "character," as portrait painters have it. From the former stream down over the collar of the coat silver locks, which impart a most venerable air to the aspect of the preacher. The forehead is good, the eyes brilliant and piercing — extraordinarily so in so old a man; for time, though he has relentlessly stamped the marks of the "crow's feet" at their outer angles, has spared their lustre. The nose is small; the mouth, thin-lipped, compressed, with a drag downward at its angles, and the chin small and somewhat projecting. You could not look on that face without feeling sure that it belonged to a man of vigorous mind; nor phrenologically survey that head without being convinced that it was on the shoulders of a person who had a will of his own, and chose to do pretty much as he liked. It reminded me somewhat of the cranium of the late John Quincy Adams, and I believe that that revered politician very much relished, as do many more of us, to have his own way.

I had fully expected from Dr. Cox's staid and sedate appearance, that I should hear one of those old-school sort of sermons which seem to be so much in character with a long career and gray hairs. But I was mistaken. Scarcely had the reverend gentleman read his text than he flew off at a tangent into a field of thought which I

should never have dreamed would have been suggested thereby; and during the whole discourse he never once referred to it. So far as a text went, any other passage picked at random from Genesis to Revelation would have passed muster just as well. But as the preacher proceeded, it was evident that he had within his fertile brain a large fund of original thought, a vast amount of shrewdness, and ample store of good solid learning;—not your modern, flashy scholarship, your spurious mental coinage; but genuine gold, the stuff which rings as well as shines, and passes current anywhere. You could see, plainly enough, that no shallow thinker stood before you, but one who had gone down deep into the mines of truth, and had dug out rich ore from thence. There was a dignity, too, in his style; he spake as one having authority, and he bound up his beauties within small sententious circles. Occasionally he flung out a sly sarcasm, or heaped ridicule on some dogma, or disposed with a back-handed logical blow of some error, but always with an air of calmness that added weight to what he uttered. Like William Jay, of Bath, he now and then said things which made one smile, but there was no buffoonery, no low humor; he evidently felt that the pulpit was no place for a jest, the church no tilting ground for wit.

Occasionally Dr. Cox utters some very pithy sayings; he has the happy faculty of giving to commonplace ideas an attractiveness, by clothing them in quaint language. He is fond, also, of odd analogies; for instance, speaking of persons who profess to do a vast deal for religion



without really possessing any, he said that some resembled Noah's carpenters, who built a ship in which other people were saved, although they were drowned themselves. Many illustrations of this faculty might be adduced, but space forbids me to pen them in this place.

Dr. Cox is a preacher, *sui generis*, — "none but himself can be his parallel." No one ventures to imitate him, and he is above copying from any model whatever. As to style, properly speaking, he has none; or if he has, it is one manufactured by himself, and is not, as a whole, referable to any known order of eloquence. Sometimes he displays quite a Mosaic effect, a dash of Demosthenes, a clipping from Cicero, a piece of Pindar, some of Paul's energy, St. John's warmth, Peter's enthusiasm, with none of Thomas's hesitation. All of these now and then combine to make up discourses that are perfectly *unique*. But the reader who desires to form any accurate idea of Dr. Cox, should go and hear him for him or herself. In the pulpit he is eminent, and as a platform speaker few are more efficient, and it may be added, useful.

We have already noticed some eccentricities of Dr. Cox. He has recently published a somewhat eccentric book, in which he gives accounts of "interviews" between himself and various individuals, — Infidels, fashionable ladies, and the like. Among other notables, he encounters a brace of Mormon Prophets, his account of which being very characteristic of our subject, I quote, and with it conclude this sketch.

One hot Sabbath, just as services were about to commence, the Doctor was accosted by a couple of individuals, who addressed him as "Brother Cox, a man of God, a friend of truth, a lover of righteousness, and a preacher of the Gospel." They wished an opportunity to hold some conversation with him, and were directed to call at his study at the close of the services. At the time appointed they made their appearance, and announced themselves as "Latter Day Saints," sent on a special mission to the Doctor to announce to him that he was to be converted and rise to great eminence among the chosen people. The Doctor, very naturally, wanted something in the shape of a miracle as a credential. These they professed to be able to work, and to have worked, but declined repeating the performance just then. The Doctor suggested that at least they might read and construe a verse or two of the Greek Testament. This met with no more favor from the new Apostles, who began to mutter something about "an adulterous generation seeking for a sign," and to impress upon him the necessity of faith. Whereupon the dialogue took a somewhat spicy turn. I take the liberty of condensing it somewhat, but preserve the main points. It will be borne in mind that figure 1 represents the Doctor, and 2 and 3 his opponents: —

"1. I shall not stir another step in this business till I see the evidence on which you rely, as self-vaunted envoys extraordinary, and ministers plenipotentiary from the court of the King of kings, to sustain your apostol-

icity and vindicate your claims. Here then, I take my stand, and call for evidence, — for proof. How am I to know, gentlemen, that you are not impostors?

“3. You had better take care, Sir, what you say. The evidence may come sooner than you desire, and as you do not expect, and what you will not relish, sure enough! I would just warn you to beware!

“1. You mean that the evidence may surprise me, coming in the way and style of some divine judgment?

“3. Yes, Sir, I do; and I hereby warn you against it.

“2. Oh! if it should come now, what would become ——

“1. Very well, gentlemen, I am ready, and quite content. Send a good rousing judgment along — a little touch of earthquake, some thunder and lightning, cholera morbus, palsy, volcano, avalanche, nightmare, gout, ship fever, neuralgia, or anything else you please; yes, little or much of it, gentlemen, and the sooner the better, as I am ready, if you are, and quite disposed to be accommodating.

“3. Sir, are you forgetting yourself all the time?

“1. Not at all; I am only remembering you. Let us have some of the evidence. Come! your testimonials, your seals, your signs, gentlemen!

“2. Why, I never saw or heard such a man as you!

“1. Nor I ever read or conceived before of such men or such apostles — exactly, as you are.

“2. I fear you are a hardened old ——

“3. Yes, and blinded, too, with darkness.

"1. Why, surely there seems to be considerable darkness in my study—more than common this afternoon; and I wish there was more air, since light seems so scarce and heat so oppressive in it.

"3. Sir, to tell you plainly, you are a hardened man and a hypocrite, given up, reprobate.

"2. Oh, how dark, dark, dark you are!

"3. Yes, you are a hypocrite, a liar, Sir; and I know——

"1. Stay just a moment. Pray, be quite calm. I can refute all that instantly on the authority of two apostles. Instead of liar, hypocrite, reprobate, I am, you remember, "Brother Cox, a man of God, a friend of truth, a lover of righteousness, and a preacher of the Gospel." This is a great honor, quite a high and memorable endorsement. It is, at least, the exalted character I had a few hours since. If I have it not yet, but have grown so bad at once, as you now denounce me, it must be because I have been sometime in your company.

"2. Sir, I have no respect or care for you.

"1. Queer apostles these, to be so mistaken in their inspiration, for once!

"3. Yes, Sir; hypocrite, hardened——

"1. Silence, gentlemen. You are now going rather too far. There seems no immediate prospect of my becoming a latter-day saint, you perceive. It is the Lord's day, and I wish not to break it.....I have done! You need make no reply. Now, I have only two more things to say; the first, this is my study; the second, there is the door; make rectilinears in quick time, and

leave the premises immediately. I am not your brother or your dupe.

“With this, I rose and opened the door, pointed them out, cleared the way for them, and have never heard from them since. They went down the stairs and disappeared as directed, uttering many and various denunciations and inspired predictions, for which God, who hates imposture more than any of us, will call them to account, when their true character shall be displayed to the universe.”

This interview reminds me of one which occurred between the Rev. William Jay, to whom I have before referred, and a gentleman who took it upon him to convert the venerable Bath minister from the “error of his ways.”

Some years since, when the followers of Edward Irving were in the very height of their enthusiasm — or rather, madness — a church was formed at Bristol, and great exertions were made by its members to convert to the “true faith” the ministers of that and some neighboring cities and towns. So popular and influential a man as William Jay could not be overlooked by them, and measures were accordingly taken to insure his coalition with the new lights.

To promote this desirable end, one Mr. Curtis, a good, easy but weak man, who had been ordained one of the “Angels” of the Bristol Irvingite church, proceeded to Bath, and called on the celebrated minister, who courteously received him, and inquired respecting his business. Mr. Curtis informed him, in reply, that he was

Angel from the Irvingite church at Bristol, and that his "mission" was to induce Mr. Jay to join them and be saved.

"An Angel — eh?" asked Mr. Jay in astonishment, for it is not likely that he thought, like one of old, he should entertain a visitant from the skies.

"Yes," said Mr. Curtis, "an angel, Sir; an angel in deed and in truth."

Mr. Jay did not smile visibly, but gravely requested Mr. Curtis to take off his coat, which the gentleman, after some hesitation, did. Divested of this outer garment, Mr. Curtis felt Mr. Jay's hands busy about his shoulder blades — "Pray, what are you doing, Sir?" he at last asked.

"Feeling for your wings," was the reply; at which the angel grew so wroth, that, hurrying on his coat, he darted down stairs and quitted the house, in order to return and narrate the want of faith in Mr. Jay, to his redulous brethren and sisters at Bristol.

Since writing the above sketch the following "hit" at Dr. Cox met my eye in a New York paper:—

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING. It is the "cue" of some folks to be elaborate and verbose in small matters, and so it is with our Christian brother, the Rev. Dr. Cox, of Brooklyn. Ask him to dinner, and he will answer you with an epic. Solicit his presence on any public occasion, and he will overwhelm you with Latin, Greek, and English with the syntax inverted, mixed up together in inextricable confusion. There is one characteristic of the doctor's style which sticks out in all the *efforts* of his

pen. We mean his egotism. This characteristic is particularly conspicuous in his published answer to a private card from the directors of the Crystal Palace Association, inviting him to be present at the inaugural ceremonies.

Most people would have replied to the invitation in six lines ; but the Reverend Samuel Hanson Cox, D. D., occupies nearly half a column in declining, gracing his missive with five lines from Virgil, or, what the reverend gentleman calls him, " the Mantuan bard," and enlivening it with his own amplification of the same, in the vulgar tongue, extending to the length of twenty lines. Having delivered himself of this paraphrase, which does more credit to his piety than his poetic talent, he winds up with the following mixture of compliments and prayers, which is well enough in its way, but sounds odd as a response to a common-place note of invitation :

" Please, sir, appreciate this votive venture ; truly neither premeditated, nor transcribed ; and expanding as my feelings move the pen that wrote it ; and yet, though long, I feel it right to mention that mine is the greatest loss, that, on such an occasion of signal occurrence, I may not enjoy with you, and welcome to this London of our country, our nation's honored chief and head, with his faithful counsellors around him, gracing the scene, and representing our vast republic, in relations so worthy of statesmanship, so dear to patriotism, so excellent in history, so properly consonant with the influence and the sanction of religion ! God bless Franklin Pierce, the President of the United States of America — bless his

administration — bless our country — bless the nations of the earth — bless you all, now, henceforth, and forever, for the sake of our Redeemer, and our Lord, Jesus Christ ! ”

Dr. Cox is, no doubt, a man of enormous mental force, but he wastes his intellectual ammunition on small affairs. He is great, in fact immense, in small things. Set him on a paper of tobacco, a long nine, or a spittoon, and he will fire one of his Paixhan guns of eloquence into it, knocking it on the instant into smithereens.

Probably the doctor is a good man — in fact, we have no doubt of it ; but we are quite sure, although we have never manipulated his head, that the self-approbatory organs are protuberant. We should say that his love of approbation is at least 7, by Fowler’s scale, and his self-esteem ditto. His organ of reverence may be about the same — or it may not. As a preacher, we do not particularly admire either his matter or his manner. He is, however, a man of talent and learning, and, as we have already intimated, “ really conscientious.”



## CHAPTER VIII.

ROWE STREET CHURCH. A CHURCH AMONG THE MOUNTAINS. HYMN BOOKS AND HYMNOLOGY. AN EFFECTIVE CHOIR. DR. BARON STOW. HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE. STYLE OF PREACHING. THE ORATOR AND THE TEACHER.

ON turning from Essex into Rowe street, that quiet and pretty city nook, at whose northern extremity we almost seem to catch a glimpse of the green country amidst the otherwise "endless meal of brick," the wanderer will perceive two prominent objects—a church turret and a church spire. The former is old fashioned, destitute of architectural beauty, and by no means picturesque. The latter soars upward in all its gothic glory from a fitting temple for worship, and is an ornament to that portion of the city in which it is situated. It is to this dark red sandstone structure that I am this morning bound; but as full half an hour must elapse before the summoning bell will swing forth its welcome, I saunter through the adjacent streets arm in arm with an old church-goer, like myself, who, however, possesses a great advantage over me in his long and intimate acquaintance with the Boston pulpit.

I referred, it will be remembered, in my last sketch, to church architecture in general. I am not now going

again into that subject, but I cannot help alluding to the exterior of this Rowe street church, for it is well worthy of a passing remark. The edifice is, despite some architectural anachronisms scarcely worth pointing out, extremely beautiful. High above its roof soars a gracefully proportioned spire, which is terminated by an ornamental carving. This is well. I am no liker of the monstrous and deformed effigies that we see occasionally displaying their golden surfaces in mid air. Now a cross appears to me to be the most appropriate symbol which can surmount a religious edifice ; and though some good people object to the use of this emblem, on account of its having been so extensively exhibited by Roman Catholics, I cannot, for my own part, see any reason for its rejection. I fancy there is more prejudice than piety in the objections to its more general adoption.

But, perhaps, the earliest known addition to the summit of a church spire was, after all, the best. Some years since as I was travelling in Wales, after a long and wearisome walk over a bleak and forlorn moor, upon which loomed up here and there Druidical remains of Cairn or Cromlech, gaunt and grey in the twilight, I came suddenly upon one of those little mountain churches, surrounded by its lonely burial ground, which at long intervals give the only indications of man's existence in those remote districts. It was an ancient time and storm-battered building, whose spire now stood out in bold relief ; for, on the horizon's verge, stretched far away to the right and left, an opening beneath the curtain of cloud, that, dun and rapidly deepening into

gloom, though its lower edge was yet tinged with lurid hues from the to me unseen sun, was rapidly descending to conceal from mortal sight that radiant "vista into Heaven."

As with an eye for the picturesque, — and, in such situations, dull must he be who does not possess it, — I drank in the scene whilst resting on a huge boulder. I noticed, that distinct and sharp against the luminous sky I have spoken of, and on the very summit of the old church spire was, greatly magnified by the deceptive light, a gigantic human hand, with the fore finger extended and pointing upward. At first I supposed it to be an optical illusion; but the shifting hues caught from the western sky, and a nearer approach to the object itself, showed me that a hand carved in stone surmounted the building. And afterwards in conversation with a distinguished Welsh antiquary, Dr. Downes, — one of Blackwood's corps of contributors in its best days, and as Christopher North in reviewing his "Mountain Decameron" termed him, the "Salvator Rosa of prose writers," — I heard that such a terminal, or, more correctly speaking, "finial," to a spire, was by no means uncommon in the land of Saint David. Now what could be more suggestive than this device of a finger pointing heavenward? As I that evening gazed thereon, I fancied that no more powerful sermon was ever preached in the pulpit below, than by that lofty stone finger. There it had stood for centuries, and there it may remain during centuries to come, a silent director to the "things that are unseen and eternal." As I passed the building itself I climbed over the

“hatch,” the only barrier to an entrance into that unfrequented temple, and stood beneath the ancient roof,

And in truth it was a solemn sight  
To see that church in the dim twilight  
With its pulpit, and never a parson there ;  
Its clerk’s desk with no one to mutter a prayer.  
Its silent bell, and no girls nor boys  
To lustily sing with heart and voice ;  
Its empty pews ; its musty books ;  
And its carved men in stonemasons’ nooks !  
All looked shadowy, gaunt and odd,  
In that hushed and desolate house of God !

Such or something like them were the lines which I scrawled under a hastily-taken drawing of the interior of the old Welsh church. But back from the mountains must I come, and the voice of my companion at once dispels the dream.

We had been talking about the preachers of the day, and in reply to some remarks of mine my friend said : —

“ Upon the whole, the pulpit in our day does not deal with deep convictions — it is not an age of deep convictions ; yet whenever a man such as Baron Stow, whom we are about to hear, with deep convictions speaks, he is listened to earnestly. No matter what a preacher’s convictions may be, indeed, if it can be felt that he has them, and that he does not sham the having them, men will attend to him.”

“ I almost fancy,” said I, “ from what I have observed, that the convictions of the skeptic are stronger than the convictions of the christian. Such men as Newman and

Froude, and one whom I might mention nearer home, are potent ——”

“Aye — aye,” interrupted my companion, “they, too, are the sons of faith; but what a cheerless, cold, moonlight faith it is! Now the books of one of the men you allude to are circulating largely, are received by all the young, thinking, purely-affectioned spirits of America, and with few exceptions the pulpit does not supply, what every pulpit ought to supply, a Catholicon for the “leperous distilment.” There is no salvation from skepticism, so long as preachers tell their auditors to believe only what can be comprehended by the sense, and yet nearly all our modern books of christian guidance are based upon such appeals.”

By this time we had reached the church door, and our conversation was cut short, for which, perhaps, the reader may not be sorry.

The interior of Rowe street church is exceedingly beautiful, and to my mind just what a church interior should be. The style is gothic, and the warm, rich brown tint of the walls, blended with the dark walnut wood of the pews, pulpit and gallery fronts, produces a charming effect. The windows are adorned with stained glass: and for once the colors are not too glaring — only sufficiently brilliant to temper the sober radiance within, with occasional gem-like hues on cushion and carpet. The pulpit, with its pure gothic screen-work at its back, its adornments of arch, pillar, lozenge and quatrefoil, is quite in character with the rest of the edifice; and the groined roof surmounting the clere-story windows, harmoniously

cover and combine all. The organ had been erected on a modern principle, in consequence of which the space usually allotted to it in the gallery was saved, but I confess I missed the gilded pipes, which seem to give character to a church. However, room is of more consequence than mere appearance, and so I suppose the judicious builders considered.

Scarcely had I entered the church, when a gentleman, observing that I was a stranger, very courteously and promptly showed me to a seat. Now such little attentions as these can only be properly appreciated by those who, like myself, are far from home. One does not always receive them though, and therefore I now gratefully record the attentions which I have on more than one occasion received at Rowe street church. I have heard tell of a certain newly-married husband, who, whilst making his morning toilet, exclaimed, as he gazed toward the just reddening east:—"The glory of the world is rising!" His better half, imagining that *she* was the object alluded to, chimed pleasantly in with—Ah, my dear! but what would you say if I had my new shot silk dress on?" And so, although as a mere dropper in to Mr. Stow's church, I was most politely accommodated in a comfortable pew, how much more might I have been honored, had my conductor to the said pew known that he was escorting THE CHURCH-GOER! Luckily for my modesty, the claret-colored old fashioned coat and spectacles escaped his observation.

Taking up a hymn-book which lay beside me, I turned to its title page and discovered the name of Baron Stow

as one of its compilers. Now in the matter of hymn-books, I am rather curious, and it may be critical. More than this, I always look at a new (to me) collection of sacred lyrics with suspicious eyes, for so often have I met in such with mutilated versions of fine hymns ; alterations to suit the tastes or the doctrines of particular sects, that I have more than once flung them aside with anything but a complimentary criticism. And it appears to me one of the most shameful and unjustifiable things in the world to take a hymn of Watts, for example, and so twist and torture it that its author would never have recognized it, to fit some sectarian crotchet or other, although such author's name be appended to it. In ninety-nine cases out of one hundred, too, the alterations prove to be spoliations, — the bunglers mar what they vainly attempt to mend. Why, I have actually seen that fine hymn of Watts's, "There is a land of pure delight," completely burked by additions and leavings out. In fact, these metre-mongers ought to be severely punished, for I hold that a compiler has as much right to walk into my parlor and alter the hanging of my pictures, as to take reflections of my mind on paper and distort them to suit his purposes. There are, I grant, instances in which verbal alterations may be made for the sake of rhythm, or obsolete words may be advantageously expunged, but the sense should never be interfered with, and the patch-work process ought to be altogether abolished.

So I read through the preface to "The Psalmist," (the name of the collection of hymns used at Rowe street church, and I believe by the Baptists generally

throughout America) and since then I have carefully looked over its pages. Of course either commendation or censure from my pen respecting it would but little avail; but I cannot avoid saying that "The Psalmist" is, without exception, one of the best collections of hymns that it was ever my fortune to fall in with. From the title page to the last leaf, although there were some alterations, there were none that were not judicious, and in most cases they were amendments. It was evident enough that poetic minds, as well as pious hearts, had had to do with that selection. Indeed, no *good* hymn book could be produced unless by such a happy combination of religion and taste. Alas! that the two should so often be separated! There are only one or two other hymn books which are fit to be named in the same category as the one of Messrs. Baron Stow and S. F. Smith's, and that is the collection made by the Rev. John Liefchild, of Craven Chapel, London. These hymns are all original, and were contributed by various pens, for the use of that particular chapel, but are little, if at all, known in this country. I should, however, recommend any future editor of a hymn book to purchase a copy of it. Among the contributors to it, are James Montgomery, Joseph Cottle, Josiah Conder, and others.

One of these original hymns from the pen of the Rev. Edward White of Hereford, I am tempted to quote, because of its exceeding beauty. It is entitled

"WITHIN THE VEIL.

'Tis but a veil that hangs between  
The saint, and joys divine;



And beams of mercy oft are seen  
Amidst its folds to shine.

When fainting pilgrims weep no more,  
But 'mid their woes rejoice,  
'Tis light from Heaven has saved the poor,  
And raised the grateful voice.

When flames around the martyr's brow  
Forbid his faith to fail,  
The beams that on his features glow  
Come from ' Within the Veil ;'

And hourly doth that veil unfold  
Some waiting saint to bless,  
Whom Jesus summons to behold  
His face in righteousness !

The angels bear them, one by one,  
To join the ransomed throng  
Who, round about the Eternal Throne,  
Awake the Conqueror's song !

Their harps of gold we hear not now,  
But soon the day will rise,  
When veiled no more, we all shall know  
The glories of the skies !"

What an interesting article a *good* chapter on hymnology would be, if written by one who was well posted up on the subject. I wonder that some one has not taken up the pen on this hitherto neglected topic. What know we of the poor, obscure Baptist minister in England, who wrote the most magnificent hymn that any one, not

an inspired writer, ever penned ? I refer to the hymn or ode commencing with

“ The God of Abraham praise,  
Who reigns enthroned above !  
Ancient of everlasting days,  
And God of love ! ”

Strange to say, the author of the hymn never wrote but one — this one. Like the celebrated member of Parliament, who opened his mouth in Saint Stephen's but once, and so earned the title of “ single-speech Hamilton ; ” the poor Baptist preacher having made but one utterance, might lay claim to a similar *soubriquet*. What interesting histories may be connected with Watts's compositions, or Wesley's, or Doddridge's, and it would be curious to collate the several editions of them from the earliest downwards, and note the changes which have been made. Then the histories of some particular hymns — the feelings they have created — the consolations they have afforded — the triumphs they have achieved ; the circumstances, too, under which they were composed ; all these and other facts connected with hymn history would be deeply interesting, aye, and novel too, which is saying a great deal in these days. Let some young, half employed minister or student look to it, and thank us for a hint which carried into practice may gratify the christian public, and put some dollars in his pocket.

But all this while I am travelling somewhat out of the record, as the Legists say.

The minister rises and utters a brief prayer, after which he reads the hymn, "Another six days' work is done," with much feeling. His voice is deep, solemn and well modulated. Evidently he feels what he expresses in words; and the author of that hymn, could he hear it so recited, would be satisfied with the utterance given to his ideas. This is, after all, the triumph of hymn reading. And now, the verses having all been read, the unseen organ peals forth its low diapason.

The short, sweet prelude concluded, the choir sends forth a strain of subdued melody. Ah! they have caught what choirs so seldom catch—the spirit of the strain which is syllabled by their lips and tongues. Softly, and with an emotion of joyful repose, is told the cessation of the week's toil; and the announcement of the dawn of "another Sabbath," is made in jubilant though gentle tones. Now, amidst floating harmonies that steal along roof and aisle, is the soul invoked to arise and enjoy the day its God has blessed; and then a vision of the Sabbath of the skies seems dimly to appear beyond the boundary and verge of this we are now spending in his courts below; of that new and better day, whose dawn no clouds shall overshadow, which shall ever be growing brighter and fairer as it approaches perpetual noon, and whose sun shall set no more! Treason against taste it may be, but I am sincere when I say that I would rather hear that hymn sung as I that morning heard it, by the Rowe street chapel choir, than listen to the combined harmonies of all the great opera singers in existence. And with all this beautiful execution,

there was no musical affectation, — none of the polyltrasheries of “shake,” or “trill,” or quaver;” all was simple and pure. The organ was remarkably well played; the soul seemed to tremble with the trembling key, as the melodious murmurs swept along, and the voice and the instrument became as one in the act of harmonious adoration and praise. The leader of this fine choir is, I believe, Mr. Gould, a member of one of our Boston publishing houses.

Let us now glance at the preacher, from whom, I fear, my attention has too long wandered.

And first in regard of personal appearance. Having more faith in Lavater’s doctrines than in those of Spurzheim, — in other words, believing that the face is a better indication of a man’s mind than the outside of his cranium can be, I regarded Dr. Stow rather physiognomically than with any reference to his cerebral or cerebellic developments. His face, then, greatly preposessed me in his favor, a rather uncommon circumstance with me, for I am by no means apt to fall in love with anything at first sight. It may be owing to some twist in my mental organization, but I am rather apt to look for faults than for excellencies in all new acquaintances. However, in the case of Dr. Stow I was much impressed with the grave solemnity [gravity and solemnity without a tinge of gloom] of his countenance. He looked as one conscious of the importance of his office — of the awful responsibility of the position he occupied as a “legate of the skies.” Of middle age, or but little beyond it, his face and figure were fully developed. Dark, scan-

ty hair covered his head, and was combed partially over a broad, white forehead. The nose was prominent and slightly aquiline, — the mouth expressive of decision and energy. As I have before said, his voice was deep and melodious, varied, however, in its modulations, by the topics on which he dwelt; now melting by its pathos, now arousing by its earnestness, and anon attracting attention by its pleading cadences. You could not look at Baron Stow's face without feeling persuaded that it was the index of a holy and devoted mind. It attracted you towards it by the very force of gentleness. Mildness and benevolence were traced on it as on an open book, and looking on it we could realize Cowper's exquisite description of the faithful minister, which will occur to every reader's mind. So much for personal appearance. Now for an attempt, feeble though it must necessarily be, to delineate his mental aspect.

The person who visits Rowe street church in the expectation that he may be gratified by listening to remarkable flights of oratory, will be almost certainly disappointed. Great plainness of speech, depth of thought, simplicity of diction, scriptural language and affectionate appeals, are the staple of Dr. Stow's sermons; but you will look in vain for rhetoric flash, metaphysical subtleties, brilliant metaphors, or affluence of imagery. His sermons are distinguished for the great naturalness of their divisions. The texts, as it were, divide themselves of their own accord. For instance, a friend informs us that when he preached from the text "And the door was shut," he remarked that there were two classes implied

by the shutting of that door — they who were shut in, and those who were shut out. This reminds us of a sermon we once heard preached by a Welsh minister from the text “Why will ye die?” In that case the minister, by emphasizing in turn each separate word, made four divisions: *Why* will ye die? — why *will* ye die? — why will *ye* die? and why will ye *die*? A minute analysis also characterizes his discourses, and the very basis of all of them is fervent piety. Of pathos he is a master, and with a gentle hand does he often unseal the fountains of tears. Perhaps no man’s sympathies are more universal, and hence, in hours of trial, or

“When languor and disease invade  
This trembling house of clay,”

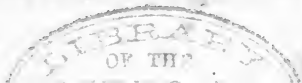
his ministrations are peculiarly acceptable. The funeral sermons of no other minister whom we can call to memory are so impressive as Baron Stow’s; take those which he recently delivered on the deaths of the late Rev. N. W. Williams and Dr. Sharp, as specimens. Without divesting death of its solemnity, he so addresses himself to the living as to gild the gloom of the grave. For public, and we hear for private benevolence he is remarkable, and few men in the ministerial ranks are so universally esteemed, both among his clerical brethren and by the church generally.

One remarkable feature in Dr. Stow’s ministrations is the charm by which he attracts so many young persons. We noticed a greater proportion of young men at Rowe street church than we have seen at any other.

That must be indeed a fine and amiable mind which can so enlist the generous sympathies and ardent impulses of youth. As a pastor, he stands high, and though I am far from estimating a minister's usefulness by a dollar and cent standard, yet it is some credit to him that, owing partly to his endeavors, his church has been freed from debt. The congregation is remarkable for intelligence, piety and usefulness, and the Sabbath school is in a highly flourishing condition.

I have intimated that Dr. Stow is rather a Teacher than an Orator; indeed the two are very rarely combined. Why not? The orator knows his power, and so long as he can bind his auditors by the spell of his speech, of his imagery, of his action, he disregards the remainder. The teacher knows that he has solid and substantial worth to communicate; he scorns the artificial; has in utter disregard all manner, and thinks only of his ideas, and likes them best in unadorned vestments. Ever, of course, the teacher merits most of our regard. The orator, perhaps, in the highest sense, few men can be; but every man inducted into the office of the ministry, ought to be a teacher, or he has no business in that office.

I have grown suspicious of orators, especially since I long ago found that the most frivolous of them secured the most extensive and profound attention. The orator should be great in virtue of the continued attitude of the soul; he should not mount a pair of stilts to excite the wonder of the vulgar. I confess I have never been able to see why there should be an elaboration of manner and matter for the pulpit or platform which would be scorned



in the parlor or drawing-room. What we want is honest rhetoric, manliness of speech, plainness, and a determination to make the thought in hand known and felt ; to put it in its largest and lowest relations ; to set it in the frame work of a most simple diction. The secret of all oratory in the genuine sense will be to be alive to the subject and dead to self, and this is possible. When these requisites blend in the speaker, it is needless to say the orator and the teacher are one.

The latter Dr. Baron Stow most assuredly is, and there are times when he most happily adds to it the attributes of the former.

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## CHAPTER IX.

SUNDAY IN NEW YORK. TRINITY CHURCH YARD. EARLY CHURCH IMPRESSIONS. DR. MAGOON'S CHURCH. WHISTLING A PSALM-TUNE. SKETCH OF REV. E. L. MAGOON. HIS STYLE.

THERE are few things so disagreeable to me, as being in a strange city on the Sabbath. On other days the business and bustle of the thoroughfares, the attractive shop windows, the kaleidoscopic changes of the costume of the passers-by, and other novel objects which greet



one at every turn, greatly relieve the sense of utter loneliness. But on Sundays the case is widely different. Spite of yourself you are flung upon the worst kind of solitude, the solitude of the streets. Far from his own kith and kin, the family man, in a foreign land, sees with moistened eye and quivering lip, the household groups as they proceed to their accustomed places of worship. In the notes of every church bell that swings in tower and turret, he fancies he recognizes the old familiar chime of the venerable sanctuary that is now far, far away. Kinglake, in that fascinating book of his, "EOTHEN," tells us that whilst one day reposing beneath a palm tree in the great desert, he suddenly seemed to hear the bells of the church of his native village, and so perfect was the illusion that he was absolutely startled thereby. And so in the pauses of the chimes of Trinity church, New York, there seemed to float around me echoes of the bell notes of old Saint Mary Redcliffe, the church described by Chatterton as

"The pryde of Bristowe, and the westerne londe;"

But a dozen strange objects speedily dispelled the momentary illusion, and convinced me that though water is a good conductor of sound, too many billows rolled between me and old England to allow even a Fineear, such as we read of in the fairy tale, to catch a random bell-note amid their eternal roar.

It wanted yet an hour to the time of commencing service in the churches, to one of which I intended going. So descending the steps of that great caravan-

sary, the Astor House, I strolled into the adjacent burial ground of Trinity church, and after having paused for a few moments by a monument placed over the bones of one erratic genius by the sympathetic benevolence of another, who was, in his turn, after a brilliant career, to go down to a premature grave, I left the spot with a sigh for the vanished glories of George Frederick Cooke and Edmund Kean. Both of these men, the latter especially, had been splendidly endowed — with the, for them, fatal gift of genius; each had recklessly flung away, from love of the enchanting cup, friends, fame and fortune; and now, their parts on life's stage played out, what had they left behind them but

“The glory and the nothing of a name?”

I am not sufficiently familiar with the localities of New York to state with precision the name of a street, in going through which a very old-fashioned looking place of worship attracted my attention. It could scarcely fail to do so, for anything like antiquity in the way of buildings is so uncommon in the New World, that when I come upon such, it is certain to be noted by me. This old place must have been built by some of the first inhabitants of New York, and it reminded me much of the old meeting-house interiors which we meet with frequently enough in English cities and towns. I entered, and few persons being present, I sat down in one of the spacious high-backed pews. It really seemed for the moment as though I must have been there before, every object appeared so familiar. There was just such church

furniture as I had been accustomed to see in days of childhood ; and as I gazed, memory called up the loved, the lost, the distant, and the dead, and they all seemed to crowd that dingy building.

How such accidental stumblings on places of this kind make one revert to the days of "long ago !" A writer, (I know not his or her name,) so nearly describes the first impressions that I recollect were made on my childish mind by a first visit to a place of worship, that I am induced to quote the following record of his youthful thoughts and fancies, believing that many a reader will understand it. Our unknown friend says : —

"Never shall I forget my first impressions of church. I was just out of petticoats when I made my debut in meeting. How the people got into the gallery was a mystery to my young imagination ; the stairs were in the end porches — we entered at the front door — it was an old fashioned house. The next wonderment was the big sounding-board, suspended not quite so flimsily as was the sword of Damocles, but by a single rope, which I was fearful would break, and let down the cumbrous thing on the minister's head. The ornaments upon the top of it, painted with yellow ochre, I took to be molasses candy, and my mouth watered for more of it. The glass chandelier was the next object of my observation and wonder. I could by a little stretch of the imagination, conceive how the iron rod which suspended it from the ceiling was curiously twisted, having performed a similar operation upon my sister's curling head ; but how the glass candlesticks and the ornaments were r

into such twistified shapes and quirks, staggered, amazed, and bewildered my young brain beyond measure. I was fearful that this whole concern would fall too, thinking that the iron rod was only stuck in the ceiling, but there would not be so much danger attending the downfall of this as of the sounding-board, except in the egress and ingress of the people, as it hung directly over the centre of the broad aisle. The pillars that supported the gallery were painted in a very distant imitation of marble. I had heard my father relate a story of some workmen finding a live toad in a block of marble, and my unsophisticated fancy really thought it was one of these, as there was a wide crack in a corner pillar. This discovery was too good to be enjoyed alone, so I spoke out aloud to my mother to 'look and see the place where they got the toad out!' But my parents thought it about time to take me out—so I was taken home, and an embargo put upon my church going until I could behave better."

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After quitting the old church, in which it was useless for me to remain, as I observed that the services were to be in the German language, I once more set out in search of a sermon. Passing the park I sauntered along Chatham street, and soon found myself one of a long procession, which from its character, so different from that exhibited by the denizens of the Bowery who were not to be mistaken for beings of any other race or region whatever, I knew to be composed of sedate seekers of some temple made with hands. Suffering myself to

be carried along with the stream, I turned with it into Oliver street, where I beheld the portico of a large church into which crowds were passing.

Of some persons who were standing on the top of the short flight of steps, I inquired what church it was, and who would be the officiating minister that morning. I learned that it was the Oliver street Baptist church, and that its pastor was the Rev. E. L. Magoon.

Magoon, Magoon, I said to myself. Surely I have heard that name before. Where was it and with what circumstance had it been connected? Soon I recollected that I had seen it on the title page of a book, a book on American orators, I think, but there was a something else that was associated with the name of Magoon in my mind. Suddenly by mnemonic aid I solved the enigma, if such it might be termed. Looking down the street, my eye caught glimpses of the tall spars of the shipping that lay below in the East river. Now one seldom looks at an assemblage of masts without mentally quoting the hackneyed description of a "forest" of the same. That was it — the chord of memory vibrated in unison with the phrase, and I recollected that a Rev. Mr. Magoon had figured in the notorious Forrest trial as a witness. Could the pastor of the Oliver street church be the same person? I fancied otherwise, for I could not, in my simplicity, well conceive how a clergyman could get mixed up with such a disreputable affair. It is but fair, however, to say that Mr. Magoon's testimony only went to show that he was on friendly terms with

the Forrests. With the immediate matter with which the action was based he had nothing whatever to do.

The church was spacious and commodious. As I entered, a hymn was being sung by the choir, (not the congregation,) and one voice was so audible above the others, that it seemed as if its owner was ambitious of *solo*-izing. It reminded me of another *solo* affair, which, (my pen, as I have before intimated, being of a vagrant character,) I take the liberty of here adverting to.

We were some years ago, paying a visit in Devonshire, England, and of course on the Sunday accompanied our friends to their parish church. It was one of those sweet rural places which it does one's heart good to go to ; the ancient ivy-clad tower rose from amidst its multitude of surrounding graves, on which, as we passed towards the porch, sat the villagers, chatting on various topics. It was what is called Palm, or Flowering Sunday, and according to immemorial custom, every grave in that country churchyard was covered with flowers. We shall not, however, attempt to describe minutely the scene which ensued on the Paason's arrival, nor tell how, as he passed down the churchyard walk, with his rusty cassock flying in the breeze, his sermon-book in one hand, and a huge clasped prayer-book under his arm, he with his right hand stroked the heads of the children near him, or courteously lifted his shovel hat, in acknowledgment of the bows of aged folk ; nor how we observed a pale, consumptive looking girl sitting on a tomb, (appropriate resting place for her) supported

by her grandmother, watching, with large, hopeful, languid eye, for a smile from the good man whom she knew she should not hear many times more; nor how young bumpkins, with buxom girls on their arms, pulled their front locks with their big fists, and blushed stupidly; nor, when he entered the sacred building and the service commenced, how the church was decorated with evergreens; nor how the ambitious choir, consisting of a bass viol, two fiddles, (neither of them being a Stradivarius nor a Cremona,) a reedy sounding clarinet, (it had been bought at a great bargain at a pawn shop in the neighboring town,) a bassoon, and a fife, executed "Awake my soul, and with the sun," in a very extraordinary style and manner; nor how all the little charity children in the gallery bawled prodigiously, nor how the cracked voices of the alms-house people quavered at the end of every verse, long after the other people had done singing, to the great indignation of the red-nosed beadle, who looked at the poor old creatures as if they had not souls worthy of singing at all when the Squire was present. We merely supply the outlines, the reader's imagination will readily fill them up.

One of the psalms of the day was written in a peculiarly "peculiar metre," or "*perculer*," as the Clerk pronounced it; and, unfortunately, neither the fiddles, nor the bassoon, nor the clarinet, nor the fife, could for the life of them fit a tune to it; but we will do them the justice to say, that they did the best in their power to suit it, by mixing "long, short, and common metre"

tunes together very ingeniously. They tried many ways, and very often—sometimes they would proceed pleasantly through a few bars; first the bassoon would grumble discordantly, then the fife would stop playing, although the violins fiddled away most perseveringly. In a little time the clarinet would wander away into a wilderness of sounds, lose itself and die in the distance with a feeble quaver, and lastly, a crash of discord would end the matter; and then came a new trial. But all would not do, and so, as a last resource, the old clerk got up, and to our utter astonishment, *whistled* a tune, which the choir caught cleverly; and then the fiddles rejoiced, the clarinet went into ecstasies, the fife flourished wonderfully, the bass viol solemnly sounded, and the churchwarden's face brightened up—so did the beadle's; the boys also bawled lustily; and from that time to this, Palm Sunday and Whistling Sunday have ever been with us synonymous terms.

But to come back to Dr. Magoon.

His personal appearance was striking enough. Of rather tall proportions, he seemed to assume a commanding position in the pulpit, and this air of—I scarcely know what to call it—suppose I say of indifference to what anybody thought or said, seemed to sit easily upon his shoulders. His face was full of character, and indicative, I fancied, of a mind that scorned all trammels, and thought and expressed those thoughts in any manner that seemed to him best, heedless of the praise or blame of the hearers. Iron gray hair was carelessly tossed



about over a high but narrow forehead; the eyes were large and liquid; the nose prominent, but not large; and the mouth somewhat retracted — apparently because the “grinders were few.” This, also, may have affected his speech, which was rather thick, and at times indistinct; but generally it was loud and sonorous, especially when the fire of his oratory burned briskly, as it frequently did during the discourse that followed.

Mr. Magoon’s style of preaching is rather of the erratic order. To a great extent he is extemporaneous, and frequently when you are anxiously awaiting the completion of a chain of original thought, (for he is at times truly original) he flies off at a tangent, and you become bewildered in a cloud of metaphor. His imagination is remarkably developed, but the ratiocinative power he makes little use of, if, indeed, he possesses it to any degree. Logic, argument, pure reasoning, he seems never to have studied, and, as a consequence, his discourses, though filled with striking passages, are deficient in solidity. Now and then you are startled by bursts of eloquence, which come up surging like a heavy sea over a barrier beach of fine words. Quaint, too, is he, and sometimes you cannot avoid smiling at his odd sayings. Yet, withal, he is no humorist. His opinions evidently are of a liberal character, and I should opine that folly, hypocrisy and fanaticism would find little mercy at his hands. Altogether he is a striking preacher, and the number who flock to hear his ministrations proves that he is an attractive one.

Mr. Magoon is known as an author, but with him in

that capacity I have nothing to do. I may, however, say that his books have been popular, and no work can float on the tide of success without having *some* elements of vitality in its pages.

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## CHAPTER X.

A SAILOR PREACHER. ANN STREET. FATHER TAYLOR.  
THE BETHEL CHURCH. ITS CONGREGATION.

SAILOR PREACHERS. Yes, we will for a time leave the handsome church with its well cushioned pews — its elegantly attired congregation, and its refined observances, for the purpose of visiting a place of worship where sailors “most do congregate.” Sanctuaries for seamen are generally selected in strange, out-of-the-way places ; in the neighborhood of wharves, and along side docks, and in dingy streets ; so, reader, if you be over-fastidious, we had better separate for a season ; and you, fair lady, if you care not to follow in the steps of Mrs. Fry or Miss Dix, pray take your piety and patchouli somewhere else, for I warn you that the latter will be little heeded in the places to which I am going. But I have a better opinion of you ; so, on this bright Sabbath morning, let us wander to one of the mariners’ churches,

and on future occasions we will visit the other seamen's Bethels, of which there are no less than five in Boston.

We are bound for North Square.

"Ah!" observes some reader, it may be, "we shall now have something funny, for Father Taylor is to be there. His eccentricity will afford the CHURCH-GOER a fine opportunity for indulging in grotesque descriptions or serio-comic remarks. So let us hear what he has to say of the minister of the Bethel church."

You were never more mistaken in your life, friend. I *don't* mean to be "funny." Pulpit sketching is a serious business, and I, for one, am not inclined to jest with sacred things, — if you are otherwise minded, I pray you let us part company. Let me not, however, be misapprehended. Fun and humor are very different things; — the latter, I by no means object to, even in a place of worship, and many an eminent divine has not scrupled to avail himself of it.

"But humor in the pulpit?" I think I hear one of my antique friends exclaim. "Bless me, how exceedingly incorrect; how notoriously improper and wrong; how wholly out of keeping with the character of the time and place; humor in the pulpit surely cannot be tolerated by any rightly discriminating congregation." Ah! good friends, I am quite at issue with you; I think, or venture to think, that wit and humor, duly reined and guided, as they will always be by a refined and truly pious mind, may be eminently serviceable in the pulpit as well as on the platform. They can utter a truth at a stroke

or word, and impress the results of other heavier labors by a single touch.

A great deal might be said on this topic, but I shall merely observe, in justification of my opinion, that humor, besides being a keen dissector of error and folly, presents wisdom in a more lucid form. We see truth the most clearly when it is made the most truly human ; few people are able to comprehend it when it is merely comprehended as a naked proposition — as an abstraction, or as a generalization. Here and there there may be one or another in your congregation able to follow you, and interested in your searching logic ; but a man must not preach to one or to two, but to all ; the most abstract mind in your congregation is human : draw it forth from its abstraction, as every thought has to be clothed in words to be comprehended ; as we can grasp no thought without words — cannot even think without putting what we think into words, — so we do best service for truth when we develop its high humanity. And do you not know that *human* and *humor* are one ? You see that in my idea of humor I have not thought, as most people seem only to think, of broad grins — of caricaturing — of loud boisterous laughter. Oh no ; the best humor runs along like quicksilver ; it is felt, but it makes no noise. And you may be sure that whenever there is a man who succeeds in winning unfaltering attention to his speech, while he describes homely scenes and things, or while he makes his pertinent common sense appeals, be sure this man has humor not the less because he does not cause it to leap and chuckle before you.

Very much of the objection to Humor as a teacher results from its very frequently being confounded with vulgarity; but vulgarity is coarse and sensual — humor is refined and spiritual; vulgarity is animal — humor is human. I once heard a man in London — I mean James Wells, of the Surrey Tabernacle — (let not this be confounded with the Surrey chapel, of which James Sherman is pastor) who has a congregation of from twelve to sixteen hundred persons constantly listening to him. I say I once heard him spiritualizing a wheelbarrow — (just as Eliza Cook in her trashy mock-poetry might embellish a poker) — describing his own power in analyzing the subterfuges of sin, “because he was like the old woman, who having been in the coalhole, knew where to look for her daughter,” likening the Arminian theology to “milk and water,” and “the gospel dispensation to fine old crusted port.” Rubbish like this is composed of mingled blasphemy, vulgarity and absurdity. I say the man who can be guilty of this is not enough in earnest to be humorous — that is, to have a real perception of the nicer and finer shades which we denominate humor. Such men would do to make a mob of bumpkins laugh at a village fair; but I call him a humorist who, like Cervantes, can shatter to pieces an already diseased and dying error; like Richter, distil from laughter the wisdom of the universe; or like Chaucer, paint portraits of such true beauty as to last through all time.

Very different is the route we are now travelling from the fashionable regions of Beacon or Park streets. We have left State street in its Sunday silence — a silence

only disturbed by a few dangles about the post-office entrance, — behind us, Faneuil Hall, too, is closed and still, and Quincy Market no longer presents its long arcade filled with creature-comforts and comestibles. Skirting that quaint old gabled building at the corner, we soon find ourselves in the gentility tabooed region of Ann street, or as it is now called after a cardinal point of the compass — North street, — the stars however of *that* “North” being exceedingly erratic and wandering, and by no means of as true and faithful a character as the mariner’s sky or beacon-light.

Be careful how you walk along these sidewalks, for at every step an open trap-door yawns to engulf you ; and to escape the dangerous depths — more dangerous and deceitful than any which yawn on dismal seas — you must plunge into the foul gutter that lazily flows by, reeking with filth and pestilence. On week days these dens send forth from their hideous recesses sounds of fiddle and tambourine that mock the surrounding moral desolation, and act as lures to some dance-loving tar ; but now, a certain compulsory respect is paid to the Sabbath day, and for vile music is substituted viler oaths and curses that fall from the lips of men, boys, women and girls, that lie blinking and blearing on the steps ; their drunken fits of the previous night not being half shaken off. As we proceed, we note at the corners of lanes and courts, villanous looking boys who eye you furtively, and then as a police officer appears in sight, dive back into the gloom from which they had emerged, only to reappear when the civic functionary is out of sight. Here

and there a groggy, coatless sailor is to be seen reeling along with a slatternly wench, and as you pass the barbers' shops a buzz of strange noises issues from the open doors. All around is filth, folly and iniquity, and were it not for a few decently dressed people who are walking sedately toward the church in North Square, you would imagine that Pandemonium had here located a colony, so fiendish, foul and ferocious appeared the face of every man, woman and child, that slunk about within its horrible precincts.

Having reached a "fork" of Ann street we enter North Square — the name clearly a misnomer, seeing that it is a triangular space, — but what is in a name? Boston is called a moral and a model city, and we have just witnessed what iniquity blackens and fosters in its very heart! In this North square we know there is a church, but as yet we discern it not; but looking upward we see from a stunted tower a blue flag waving, and in front of us are open doors, flanked by pillars of rough undressed granite, through which people are passing, and feeling assured that this is Father Taylor's church, we pause in our walk.

Just opposite where we stand, the door of a house is opened; a rather striking looking person emerges from the interior and proceeds briskly along the sidewalk towards the church door. The people, or some of them, stare at him; but on he goes, heeding none of them. He is of the average height, but spare and wiry — no superfluous flesh about his iron frame — and he treads the street as firmly as a youth, though more than sixty years

must have passed over that weather-beaten figure. His chest is wrapped up in a gray plaid, of a small checked pattern, and — for the air is keen — he muffles up his face with it, permitting us only to see some iron-gray locks that straggle from under his closely-pressed down beaver. But no matter, we shall have an opportunity presently of seeing him to better advantage, for that is FATHER TAYLOR.

After ascending a short flight of steps, we find ourselves in the Bethel church. It is small and neat — the only ornament being a large painting at the back of the pulpit, representing a ship in a stiff breeze off a lee shore, we believe, for we are not seaman enough to be certain on the point. High over the mast-head are dark storm-clouds, from one of which a remarkably small angel is seen, with outstretched arms — the celestial individual having just flung down a golden anchor bigger than itself, to aid the ship in her extremity, we presume, although there is attached to the said anchor but a few inches of Californian cable, which for any practical purpose would not be of the slightest use. However, we must not be critical on allegories; and perhaps many a sailor now on the great deep has pleasant recollections of the picture — if so, a thousand such anachronisms might well be pardoned.

Whilst the choir in the gallery is singing a hymn to the homely tones of a small organ, let us glance at the congregation; and a motley gathering it is.

There are no affectations in this place of worship, whatever there may be in some others that we wot of.



From our pew (into which we were ushered by an old sailor with a patch over his eye, and a limp in his gait,) we can survey the whole scene. And it is a motley one. The centre of the church is principally occupied by sailors; and in some of the side pews are landsmen, attracted by curiosity, perhaps, or they may be relatives of seamen. But somehow, even many of these have an amphibious air, as though they could, without much effort, cast off their dress coats and don the blue jacket.

Sailors of all descriptions are there. Old salts with grizzled locks, short and crisp on the temples, and thin on the crown;—"Jacks," in the prime of life, with dark hair, or locks bleached by storms and time; with sun-burnt faces, and great freckled hands, and brown necks, and with a free and easy roll in their walk; fine handsome young fellows, coxcombs of the sea, who had come "capering ashore," with plenty of dollars and dimes;—young lads with frank faces and clear eyes, and turned down blue collars, bordered with white;—rough, hairy-looking fellows, in their shirt sleeves, or red shirts, lounging in the seats uneasily, as though they were sadly out of their element—as indeed they are; and well-dressed captains and mates, with their wives and children—all looking as happy as kings and queens, because "father is home again." These, and many others, whom we cannot stay to describe, compose, to a great extent, the honest-looking, hearty audience, who are this morning to listen to Father Taylor.

But here and there are worshippers of another class. Pale, anxious-looking women, some of whom shudder in-

voluntarily as the wind roars without. And well may they, for their husbands or brothers, or sons or fathers, are far out upon icy seas, where, during the long polar night, only faint flashes of the aurora borealis, partially illuminates berg and floe ; or sweltering in the dreary calms of tropical oceans, on whose long lazy swell is reflected the coruscations of the glorious southern cross ; or it may be on surf-beaten reefs, where the shipwrecked sailor lifts his tattered signal on his broken oar, and strains his blood-shot eye, in the hope of attracting the notice of some passing ship — some vessel of Hope — whose hull never darkens the distant horizon ; or, haply, lying “ full fifty fathoms down,” his bones bleaching in ocean-caves, from whence they shall never rise until the sea give up the dead that are in it. And there are ocean widows, too, in that assemblage, not *knowing* themselves to be such, who, in their lonely rooms, to which they shall presently repair, have gaudy portraits of their absent spouses on the walls, and strange waifs and strays of the deep on the mantel-shelf — sea-weed and shells, and insect-bored wood ; and a model of a ship on a bracket, made by his own hands, and rigged to a rope ; and sea-horses’ teeth, and old books of navigation and the like — none of which they would exchange for their weight in gold.

Gradually the church has become full, but “ the cry is yet they come.” The pews are nearly every one occupied, and every now and then Father Taylor rises, and with his long arm waves some sailor to a seat that his keen eye spies out, for he has no idea of space being

sacrificed to ease. At length the pews are crammed, and now he calls the fresh-comers to the sofa of the pulpit. With half bashful looks the tars mount the steps and sit beside the minister, who at length has even his own seat filled. But he rather likes that, for he paces to and fro on the platform, a smile of grim satisfaction playing on his features. At last all are supplied with seats, and the service commences.

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## CHAPTER XI.

SAILOR PREACHERS, CONTINUED. THE PRESS AND THE PULPIT. SKETCH OF FATHER TAYLOR'S PREACHING. ✓  
"OLD TIMBERHEAD" ANECDOTES, ETC.

- THE congregation having "settled down," the minister advances to the desk, hymn book in hand, and with spectacles pushed up to the summit of his high furrowed forehead, again narrowly scrutinizes his audience. The gray plaid has been flung aside, and you see a vigorous but not fleshy frame before you. The gray eyes are piercing and filled with energy, and there is vigor and determination in every lineament. With the chin slightly dropping on the chest, he again peers over his glasses into remote corners of the church, and occasionally waves hand or hymn-book as he perceives some sailor without a seat.

At length, all being apparently disposed to his liking, he gives out the hymn.

And he reads it with much feeling — heart-feeling, I mean. His voice seems at first somewhat husky, but it is perfectly distinct. There is decision in every tone. Occasionally he indulges in a brief commentary between the verses, and it may be, requests those who do not participate in the sentiments uttered not to join in singing them. Then having gone through the hymn, the choir sings it.

Whilst they are so engaged Father Taylor does not sit down. There seems to be very little desire for repose on his part. With folded arms and spectacles again shoved up amidst his iron-gray hair, he paces to and fro on the platform — now with his eyes bent on the floor, and now curiously eyeing the people below. A hawk's eye has he, and be there a single unoccupied inch of space, you may be sure that it will not escape his notice. By the time the hymn is finished he has resumed his place at the desk, and opening the Bible with a jerk, he reads a chapter from it.

As in the case of the hymn, so in that of the chapter, he reads impressively, if not with a due regard to elocutional conventionalities. For all kinds of scholastic restraints, indeed, he has an evident abhorrence. This portion of the exercises terminated, he kneels and offers up a prayer.

The spectacles are again on the summit of his forehead, and as he waxes warm and animated we confidently expect that they will not long retain their position. But no,

they are apparently used to it, and there, spite of sundry shakes of the head — not over gentle ones either — they remain. At first his petitions to Heaven's mercy-seat are short, pithy and sententious; but as he goes on, the prayer partakes a good deal of the character of an impassioned speech. With eyes rigidly closed — a swaying motion of the body — a grip of the cushion-corners by his nervous hands — and with disarranged hair, he goes on, as energetically as any "Praise-God-Barebones" of the old Covenanter times. And he prays for *all* — for his own land and other lands — for sailors of all nations and on all seas — for the whole human race. There is an expansive benevolence in his addresses to the Deity, which seems characteristic of the man; nothing of sectarian narrowness — not a particle of bigotry. As may be expected, "they that go down to the sea in ships," engross a large portion of his petitions, and the earnestness, with which he pleads for their special necessities frequently draws tears from many an eye.

Another hymn. The choir at this Bethel church is not so scientifically proficient as are those of fashionable churches; but it is a good, plain, honest, hearty choir for all that; and what is better, the people in the pews below second the efforts of the persons in front of the organ in the gallery above. There are no flourishes, shakes or fal lals of any sort, but what are just as good — perhaps better — if one's ear is not over correct — you hear the running accompaniment of some gruff bass voice proceeding from a great, bare, hairy throat. And it is really touching to think, as you listen to those hoarse

tones, that, though they are now chanting the praises of the Most High, in subdued cadence, yet that when "mighty winds are all abroad," and seas are dashing over deck and mast, they are to be heard above the boom of the billows, and the raging of the tempest. Mr. So-and-so, the "eminent" vocalist, might sing with more taste and science, but "Jack's" voice, rough and inharmonious as some might think it, is, I confess, quite as welcome to me.

Now for the sermon.

The text is read twice ; then there is a pause, during which the preacher quietly looks around him, then with a sudden touch the spectacles ascend, and in firm, decided tones, he commences his discourse.

Have we a scholar in the desk ? Father Taylor gives the meaning of some word in the "original." And he does it well, too, though it is not difficult to discern that he has got his information at second-hand. But then, he does not pretend to profundity of learning ; he has so lofty a scorn of hypocrisy of any sort, that he would be the last man to pass himself off for that which he is not — an erudite student. Nor does he require such adventitious aid — indeed he is better without it, for though I yield to no man in my reverence for learning, I firmly believe that many a fine mind is cramped by collegiate training. For nearly every good *writer*, amongst our Divines, a good *preacher* is sacrificed.

And here I may remark, *en passant*, that the pulpit is no longer ahead of the press, as it was in the days of Whitefield and his contemporaries ; no, it creeps feebly

in the rear. What great preacher, either of America or England, would be acknowledged as a jurist in the courts of thought or of style? The pulpit, it would seem, has delegated its ancient authority and power to those wonderful types and fountains of thought in the printer's office. In many places the press has quite superseded the pulpit. In most large towns — perhaps in the area of civilization it is so : — it is so much easier, pleasanter and more instructive to read than to hear, and it must be admitted as an apology for this that this is eminently an intellectual age, and the supreme intellect, genius, is not — perhaps seldom has been — in the pulpit. Let the reader think of the names of the gifted men who wield a power by their affections, by their scholarship, or their imaginations, over the minds of men ; how brilliant, how versatile, how profuse in splendor and diction ; how illustrious in the imperial domains of thought ; and then let him think of the names of the most eminent orators or teachers from the pulpit, and he will find scarce a name worthy to be mentioned by theirs, or if so, ashamed to bring to the pulpit the genius with which it adorned the press.

To a very great degree the inefficiency of the pulpit arises from its nonchalance and carelessness — its deficiency of feeling. Would you, young minister, retain your place in the pulpit? Would you compete successfully with the press? Well, it is easy to do so ; only this is necessary : take care that your hearers — take care that the public in general have not a more perfect sympathizer in the book than in the preacher. Yes!

take care of that — take care that there is not more real life in dead paper and printed letters than in real flesh and blood. For look ! a man goes to the preacher ; he finds him passionless and cold ; idealless and dull ; unread and uninformative ; he turns hastily away. He goes to a book ; he finds it full of passion and warmth ; full of ideas and excitement ; full of knowledge and instruction ; he finds the book to be a sympathizing friend. He finds the preacher to be a tedious, tiresome talker. Now that system of pulpit ministration is quite defective, which does not compete successfully with the book. In the management of an efficient man, every sermon might be made — certainly not as great as the greatest books, but as interesting as the most interesting.

Now we shall see that it is in consequence of the warmth and earnestness of Father Taylor, as well as of his originality, he is so eminently attractive to men who would go to sleep in nineteen out of a score of our fashionable churches.

On goes Father Taylor with his sermon. After proceeding for about a quarter of an hour he gets fairly warmed up to his work ; and now, pushing the Bible to one side of the cushion, and throwing up the spectacles, he pours forth a flood of passionate oratory. Every now and then he pauses — rubs the side of the cushion with his long hand — looks as though some strong thought was seething and melting and fusing itself in the crucible of his brain — and now he pours it forth to take form and shape for the edification of his hearers. And quaint and grotesque enough these “ castings ” of his thoughts are.



Solemn and in earnest as the preacher is, it is impossible to avoid smiling occasionally at his remarks. At one moment he shall draw you a picture of the most touching pathos, so that your eyes will moisten and your lip quiver, and in the next some sharp sarcasm, or withering denunciation, or scorching satire, shall cause you to wonder at the old man's energy. Touches of true poetry are not unfrequent, and I have heard as pure eloquence fall from his lips as ever the most accomplished and much lauded amongst us ever delivered. And the glory of all these things was only the more perceptible, because, apparently, so unpremeditated. All things said and done were said and done off-hand, and in a tone that might surely appear gruff, but for the music of sensibility which turned its otherwise hard cadences to harmony, so he bluntly shook out upon his auditors words and illusions which each was a poem. No man that I have seen ever revealed more plainly than Father Taylor how much more he felt and saw than he was able to utter; his eye revealed it. The figure and the phrase were beautiful, but from that rough and careless tongue, yet quivering with sensibility, they became overpowering and sublime.

Very energetic becomes Father Taylor at times. As he speaks he paces to and fro almost gasping with emotion. Sometimes he stops suddenly — rests his hands on the cushion — stoops forward, and fixing his eye on some person or other, exclaims something in this way: — “ And *you*, sir, *you*, sir! you think *you* can escape the eye of this all-seeing God, sir, — *you*, a poor worm of the earth, — *you*, (rubbing his hands along the side of the pulpit

cushion) I tell you, sir" — etc. And then he turns to another part of the building, and in subdued tones, says: We are all of us soon to go to God's judgment-seat. Here we're like a balloon — all filled with the buoyant gas, and ready to ascend into the pure atmosphere — 'tis only confined to the ground by cords — now they're cut, and there it goes — up — up — up — and away it sails in all its beauty and freedom, far from this earth below. Yes — yes — (pointing to an old gentleman in the middle of the church) my aged brother, *you'll* soon go — there are but few cords to keep you here; you're nearly ready; the last tie will soon be cut. I can see you, like the balloon, swaying to and fro, impatient to be gone. God speed you, my brother."

To such as this would succeed, perhaps, a tirade against obstinacy. And then we are given a graphic description of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, during which we are told that the "old rascal, when going to Damascus to persecute the Christians, was knocked off his horse;" or to illustrate the process of conviction he would put himself in a shooting attitude, and shoot invisible arrows from imaginary bows right into some of the pews. Now he would, in soft and felicitous accents, describe the beauties of a Paradise morning, and then fly off at a tangent to fling a contemptuous sentence at "Mr. Fiddle-de-dee up there, who endeavored to account for the miracles of Christ." One Sunday morning I heard him, when addressing sailors, refer touchingly to his old companions of the deep, which he did something in this way. I have no notes to guide me, and therefore the

reader must not expect absolute accuracy ; but I will be as nearly correct as possible. He had been preaching a long sermon, and seemed somewhat fatigued, but suddenly he blazed up and exclaimed : “ Ah, my time is nearly up, I see, but I feel as if I was only just beginning to preach now. Yes, yes, I could keep on for hours to come ; but I *must* close. But I can't do so without a few more words to some that I may never see again. I've been engaged in the work many years, and my toil may be most done. Ah ! where are all my old shipmates gone, — they who lay in hammocks beside me, and who have fought at the same gun ? Gone, gone, they are all gone. No, blessed be God, not *all* ; there's one left. [Here he pointed to an old salt with a bald head, a red nose, and a regular man-of-war cut.] Yes, there's old Timberhead ! He and I have weathered many a storm together. But he's moored safely now, and waiting for the last bell. [Here poor old Timberhead began to show symptoms of tears, as did many more, myself included.] The summons will soon be heard, brother. Aye, and many of *you*, my aged friends, will soon hear it too. You are tossed and tempest-driven now, but it's only a little farther you have to sail ; look ahead ; you'll have only to beat round that last point, and then you'll be safe moored. Yonder's the haven full in view.” And a murmur of “ bless God ” concluded the appeal.

From this description it will be easily understood that Father Taylor is possessed of remarkable dramatic power. He acts, indeed, with the pulpit for a stage :

but he does not act the buffoon. In him, that is natural and effective which in others would be strained and affected. Sometimes he is pungent and pointed. If he observes any of the congregation sneaking out just before the contribution-box goes round, he is very apt to send a hot shot after the shabby defaulters. Does he observe any of his congregation asleep, he will not hesitate to pointedly reprimand and inform them that there is a certain place where the temperature will prevent their indulging in a nap; or if any "fast" young men are guilty of light or trifling behavior, woe to them, for verily they will have their reward of rebuke. In whatever he says or does you may be sure he is thoroughly in earnest, and that is perhaps the secret of his great success among the class to which he especially devotes his time and energies.

It has been said that Father Taylor gives one the impression of a person who hates the devil more than he loves Christ. I do not think so. Fierce indeed is the warfare which he wages against the powers of Darkness, but not less powerful is he when he dwells on the glories of Heaven and the mercy of Jehovah. With such hearers as his it is necessary that the battering-ram of Truth should be worked by no feeble hand; but happily he can heal the breach after he has made it. No, no; Father Taylor loves Christ all the more for hating Satan so much.

A volume might be filled with Mr. Taylor's pithy remarks. And we could not conceive of one which would be more interesting and instructive. His sermons entire

would never be popular, but extracts from them would be. Why has no one attempted to collect his "sayings," whose "doings" have been described by so many sketchers from Dickens down to this, the humblest recorder of them all? Doubtless many of his remarks have been remembered by his sailor hearers when they were far away from North Square, and possibly Father Taylor covets no wider popularity than this.

On one occasion we visited Bethel Church in company with a New York Comedian of high reputation in his walk. Father Taylor commenced by an appeal in behalf of a Sunday-School picnic, and spoke so beautifully of children, and showed how much he loved to see them at their little sports, that he almost seemed himself to grow young again in the recollection of them. The actor was perfectly fascinated; and at an after part of the discourse, while Mr. Taylor was indulging in a strain of pathos, I chanced to look round, and my friend, used as he was to artificial scenes and descriptions, was so affected by the unstudied art of the preacher, that he fairly blubbered behind his pocket-handkerchief.

FATHER TAYLOR is, I believe, highly esteemed and valued by sailors. And so should he be. For many a year he has loved them and labored for them. He has stood by the desolate bed of many a forlorn tar, and soothed his last hour. Many have had reason to bless him, and still he labors on heedless of age and its needed repose. Rest, however, he does not, and will not whilst there remains work for him to do. Long may he be spared to those whom he so affectionately calls his

“children,” for such lives as his are of priceless worth, and their value is only adequately estimated when forever lost. So ends our reminiscence of the sailors’ preacher, Father Taylor.

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## CHAPTER XII.

SPECULATIONS. THE MUSIC HALL. THEODORE PARKER’S CONGREGATION. THE PREACHER. HIS PERSONAL APPEARANCE. STYLE, ETC.

“HAVE you heard Theodore Parker?” — Such is the question which will be put to a stranger in Boston, who asks any questions respecting the pulpit of the “Athens of America.” Should you inquire to what denomination the preacher belongs, or at which church he preaches, you will be informed that he delivers his orations in no ecclesiastical edifice, but in the new Music Hall; and as for his particular sect, very few appear to know, or indeed care anything about it. He is never spoken of as being identified with any body of Christians; and indeed, the prefix of “Reverend” is seldom accorded to him. Theodore Parker, and Theodore Parker alone, seems to be all that his admirers care about.

But, if you are curious on the subject, you will learn

by consulting the title page of his published volume of sermons, that he is "Minister of the Twenty-Eighth Congregational Society." Many, indeed, are the disputes as to which body he really belongs. The orthodox folks, of course, repudiate him. The Unitarians show him the cold shoulder, and the whole legion of sects, in fact, will have none of him. Evangelical Christians pronounce him an infidel of the first water. Religionists of the old Puritan School, shudder when his name is mentioned, and forbid their children hearing him; and this whilst his followers boast of his piety of life and his boundless benevolence. But Theodore Parker, it is said, cares for neither praise nor censure, and Sunday after Sunday, from his desk in the Music Hall, with a sort of "Bucks, have at ye all" spirit, he discharges his arrows sharp and fast at each of them.

Reader, accompany me, in imagination, to the Boston New Music Hall. It is a brilliant Sabbath morning, and, quitting the now silent Washington street, we stroll along the verdurous walks of the "Common;" Heaven's glare of blue, tempered and toned down by the flickering masses of foliage above, through which creep sunbeams that pave as with brilliant Mosaic the grass at our feet. Scores of bells are swinging out their invitations to praise and prayer, and through Tremont street goes a long procession of church-visiting Bostonians. Following in their track, we pass Park street church, and then, suddenly turning to our right hand, enter Bumstead place, at the end of which is one of the gates of the Hall, which we enter.

You have never visited this building? Well, then, as we are early, let us ascend to the upper gallery, for the purpose of surveying the scene to advantage. And a brilliant *coup d'œil* is presented as we pass through the little glass door to our seat, and take in the whole interior at a glance. Although we are far aloft, the richly-decorated and gilded ceiling is high above our head—but look below, and tell me if you ever beheld a more charming spectacle.

Already the place is filled, the two galleries and the body of the Hall itself, and the platform nearly so. There are neither pillars nor chandeliers to obstruct the view; so that we may sit in our most comfortable chair, for such it may be called, and let our eyes wander, like Wordsworth's river, at their "own sweet will." Imagine, reader, that you are in the car of a balloon, looking down on a garden of flowers, all of which have burst into bloom, and you may form some idea of the appearance of Mr. Parker's congregation. The ladies are of course, as the reporters say, elegantly dressed, and so the various colors of ribbon, silk dress, shawl and scarf, present quite a kaleidoscopic appearance. Mercy on us! What countless yards of crape and crinoline are ingeniously folded into many a fashion below! One lady immediately beneath presents the appearance of a small head and shoulders rising from a cloud of muslin, a bust surmounting a balloon! The black coats and heads of the gentlemen relieve the glare of white, blue, crimson and multiform combinations of the prismatic tints, and give a sober tone which is really needed.



Fans are fluttering in all directions. Here and there you may observe a gentleman reading his Sunday morning's newspaper — and there, in a corner of the gallery, a young lady is busy over some "yellow-colored literature;" conversation is not interdicted, and around us is a perpetual buzz. Are you fond of notabilities? Then I'll point out one or two who are usually to be found in Mr. Parker's congregation, for we have yet a quarter of an hour to spare, and it is useless to waste time.

That tallish man with light reddish hair, a good shaped head, and whose face is indicative of great force of character, is Wendell Phillips — certainly one of the most fascinating speakers in the United States. Just beyond him, and in the seat next to the platform, is a gentleman with a shining bald head, save at the temples and behind. Look at him well, for he is a man who will leave his impress on this age. You must often have heard of him — that is William Lloyd Garrison. Hereafter, I shall furnish a sketch of this remarkable man; so for the present, I leave him. There, under the gallery, with chin in hand, is a young and rising public man. Look at his intellectual face — his keen eyes — his bold forehead — it is Anson Burlingame — a fine thinker — an adroit debater, and a ready speaker. Yonder is a young man of slight figure and low stature, but with head, eyes and forehead of remarkable size. You can see his great gray eyes through the spectacles which are before their bulging balls. That is Edwin P. Whipple. Alongside him, is one of those New England

bards, who peddle poems at "commencements" and in Lyceums, just as other Yankees vend more material "notions." But the organ commences a voluntary, so let us observe a decorous silence, and keep our eyes and ears wide open.

While the music is sounding, a gentleman makes his appearance on the ample platform, and walking to its centre, seats himself in a plain arm-chair. Before him is a small cushioned desk, with flaps on either side, on one of which is placed a Bible, and on the other a bunch of flowers. With his hands joined on his lap, he sits until the music ceases, and then rising and stepping forward, he rather indicates a preparatory prayer, than utters one; for what he does say is in so low and mumbling a tone, that only those near him can be at all benefited by it. This concluded, he opens a book and selects a hymn. While he is so engaged, let us glance at his "outer man."

You may see at once that he belongs to the studious race. That slight stoop of the shoulders, which all close students acquire, to a greater or less degree, is observable. He is rather short, or on that platform appears to be so, as we look at him from above. His figure is spare, but not slender; it in fact, is well proportioned. The head is striking; not that it is like Whipple's, of a remarkable size; but on account of its symmetrical proportions. It appears an extremely well balanced skull; but, avoiding the senseless jargon of "organs" and "developments," let me simply remark, that it is a sensible *looking* head. Excepting on the temples and behind, it

is destitute of hair, the forehead thus appearing larger than, strictly speaking, it actually is. As to the features, they cannot be called "striking;" they are, in fact, extremely common-place; nay, their expression is absolutely dull. The spectacled eyes appear to have little "speculation" in them, and the nose is of a kind which may be called insignificant. The mouth is large; the face more round than oval; the complexion pale, and the hair somewhat gray. So much for the personal appearance of Theodore Parker.

He reads the hymn well and with feeling; but his voice is thick, indistinct and husky; then he resumes his chair, and the choir, perched up behind him, sings the stanzas through, in quite a scientific style. The congregation takes no part whatever in this part of the service, and it appears rather like an exhibition of vocalism, than an act of adoration and praise. There is no *heart* in it, and little wonder that it goes off coldly.

Next, a short passage from the Bible is read, and another prayer follows. It is uttered in the same dull, husky voice, and appears devotional. As he proceeds, his tones become clearer and more distinct, and now, after all you have heard of "Atheism" and "Infidelity," you are surprised to listen to sentences and sentiments which might have fallen from the lips and flowed from the heart of the most orthodox minister in America. It contains no toilsome repetition, no offensive familiarities, no mere common places of diction, and at its close you come to the conclusion that, like a certain gentleman who is frequently libelled by being painted in the darkest of colors,

Mr. Parker is not, after all, quite so heterodox as he has been represented.

Another hymn is sung, and then Theodore Parker rises once more ; this time to preach, or lecture, whichever term you choose, you may apply to his address ; perhaps the latter is the most appropriate.

Laying aside the Bible, he places his manuscript on the velvet cushion, and from it reads a text of Scripture, merely, it would seem, as a matter of form, for, as a text you will before long see it is utterly useless. He now (and let me be understood as speaking of his discourses generally) gives utterance to a few brief, pithy remarks, and then announces the particular theme or topic of discourse. Not far has he proceeded before you are attracted by the novelty of his discourse, and by his utter disregard of all pulpit conventionalities whatever. Has some leading politician been playing "fantastic tricks" before his countrymen ? No matter who he may be, nor how high is his position, Theodore Parker dissects his conduct with a merciless scalpel, and lays open to view the blundering statesmanship or the unlucky blunderer himself, just as a lecturer on pathology might display to a class of students the morbid appearance of a liver or a brain. Evidently he has not the fear of man before his eyes ; indeed, the more exalted the quarry, the more eager is he to unhood the falcons of his sarcasm or his satire, and to rejoice as they swoop and pounce upon it. The selection of topics such as these, that is, the misdoings of men, seems to be characteristic of the preacher. Who that heard his sermon on Daniel Web-

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ster, ere the ashes of the statesman were well cold in his grave at Marshfield, will soon forget the savage earnestness with which he seized, as it were, with his teeth, on the frailties of the departed politician ; shook them as a blood-hound shakes the quivering flesh of its human victim, and then laid them down with a scarcely concealed triumph ; a triumph which took the shape of a regret ?

As some may be ignorant of Mr. Parker's real position, it may be well to give an extract or two from a couple of late published sermons of his.

“I do not believe there ever was a miracle or ever will be ; everywhere I find law — the constant mode of operation of the Infinite God. I do not believe in the miraculous inspiration of the Old Testament or the New Testament. I do not believe the Old Testament was God's first word, nor the New Testament his last. The scriptures are no finality to me. \* \* \* I do not believe the miraculous origin of the Hebrew Church, or the Buddhist Church, or the Christian Church ; nor the miraculous character of Jesus. I take not the Bible for my master, nor yet the Church, nor even Jesus of Nazareth, for my master. I feel not at all bound to believe what the Church say is true, nor what any writer in the Old or New Testament declares true ; and I am ready to believe that Jesus taught, as I think, eternal torment, the existence of a devil, and that he himself should ere long come back in the clouds of heaven.” Speaking of Jesus, he says : “ He is my historic ideal of human greatness ; not without errors, not without the stain of his times, and I presume of course not without sins — for

men without sins exist in the dreams of girls, not in real fact ; you never saw such a one, nor did I, and we never shall." In one of Mr. Parker's published works, speaking of Jesus Christ, Mr. Parker condemns him for his abusive language to the Scribes and Pharisees, when he says, " Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell ?" Mr. P. thinks this language hard and abusive, but presumes the author of the language, i. e. Jesus, is excusable by reason of his youth.

A Liberal of the first water is Theodore Parker. Human progress is dear to his heart, and most of his sermons have a bearing on this subject. With the humbler classes of society he professes, and doubtless possesses a profound sympathy. In point of originality, there are many hundreds of ministers who surpass him, for his quaintnesses are frequently taken for this prime quality. But he is perfect master of rhetoric, wit and sarcasm, and with these weapons he wages a successful warfare. No wonder he is popular among the youthful and the impulsive — they like dashing hits, and pointed allusions — but they like also, too many of them, to let other people do their thinking for them. And not a few are never more delighted than when they hear better men than themselves abused. It is an infirmity of our natures indeed, to like slashing, whether the lacerations are inflicted by pen or tongue. Could Melancthon come to Boston next Sunday and preach, the mild Reformer would not please the " pensive public" so much as Theodore Parker. No, the healthy appetite in too many of us is vitiated, and we must have our mental aliment fla-

vored with pungent condiments before we can take it down. With this sort of food, digestion has little to do — the crudities pass, and leave no nourishment behind.

Many of Mr. Parker's sermons are essays in the strictest sense. Others are dissertations on political economy ; and many are acute criticisms on men, manners and morals. They all evince much erudition and varied scholarship. What George Gilfillan said of the style of Dawson, the celebrated English Lecturer, may be said of Theodore Parker's : — " Its strength lies in its Saxonism ; it is as if Cobbett were talking Transcendentalism ; it is a strong energetic style ; it is plain and grotesque ; it is the Monk Bede, translating Goethe, or Coleridge, for the benefit of his countrymen ; it is like a carving of Carlyle set on a corbel, or in a niche of an old Saxon minster.

Mr. Parker, again, is brimful of knowledge of historical and biographical parallels, of all ancient saws, and all modern instances ; full to overflowing of language, and the power to use it ; in climax, in antithesis, in alliteration, in poetry, or in declamation ; full of wit — biting wit ; full of remembrances from the old dramatists, and he has Shakspeare almost by heart ; full of love for all new, good books : poetry, philosophy, politics ; every lecture, every speech, heaves like an ocean wave, yet we see that, like the ocean wave, it is often not only rich for what it is in itself, but for what it flows over, too ; and you feel, therefore, while you listen, that it is no effort for him to speak like that. He hangs the wreath of literature around the abstractions of politics, entwines

transcendentalism and German philosophy with everyday matters, and infuses the genius of poetry into the doctrines of Adam Smith and John Mill. He does not turn up new truths, but he labors hard to convert the arid wastes of political economy and science into a flower garden.

It is natural enough that he whose hand is so often lifted up against other men should be, in his turn, assailed. One writer asserts that "whatever may be said of him by his friends to the contrary, his true rank as a theologian is with the old English Deist." And Orestes A. Brownson says in his review : —

“ He [Mr. P.] has learning, wit, eloquence ; but he is neither strong nor amiable. He has a little dash of sentimentalism ; but he has not the large, loving heart. He has no consideration for others, no self-forgetfulness, no disinterestedness, no generosity. He can never understand what he owes to an opponent, and has nothing but sarcasm and abuse for those who differ from him. He attacks every class of the community, denounces every doctrine and institution not in accordance with his private reason, and when called upon to defend his own course, he either takes refuge in undignified silence, or replies with a repetition of his sarcasm and abuse ; he denies all authority, and then frets and scolds, or whines and whimpers because he is not listened to as a divinely commissioned teacher. He proclaims the absolute right of private judgment in all men, and then regards himself as personally attacked, insulted, abused, persecuted, if others exercise the right of private judgment against



the doctrines he puts forth. He denies the authority of the Church, of the Bible, Apostles, and even our Lord himself, and yet feels that we do him great wrong when we refuse to accept his utterances as divine oracles, and to bow down to him as more than Bible, Church, Prophet, Apostle or Messiah, and worship him as the Incarnate God. His pride blinds his judgment, and prevents him from seeing that if there is any hostility to him personally in this community, it is provoked by his own selfishness and arrogance, — by his own want of proper consideration for others, and neglect of the ordinary courtesies of civilized life. \* \* \* We never read any writings which were more despotic in principle, or which contained less of the spirit of true liberty, than those of Mr. Parker. There is liberty on his tongue, but none in his heart ; there is in words the proclamation of brotherhood — in spirit there is only rancor, hatred, bitterness, spite. Asserting the absolute freedom of opinion, he denounces in the severest terms all who do not agree with him : contending for the utmost freedom of action and the rectitude of all human conduct, he denounces as monsters of iniquity all who do not square their lives by the arbitrary rules he chooses to lay down. Asserting in lofty terms the infallibility of all human nature in all ages and nations, he holds all men but himself to have fallen into damnable errors, and to deserve to be compassionated as fools, or to be execrated as the enemies of God and man.

“ We confess, and we are sorry to be obliged to confess, that we cannot regard Mr. Parker as either a strong or a truthful man. He is not a man of broad and elevated

views, of high and generous alms, of a frank and noble nature; in his most serious efforts and loftiest aspirations there is always something low, something mean, something paltry. We always find something sinister and something cowardly in every page of his writings, or, at least something weak and spiteful, and he is the last man of our acquaintance to whom we could award the high praise he most covets — that of true manliness."

But Mr. Brownson is no "oracle." A writer in the *Christian Repository*, says: —

"Whatever may be said truthfully of Mr. Parker, even if as inconsistent as the above extracts make him, the bigoted and self-conceited O. A. Brownson ought not thus to denounce him. As a sample of Mr. B.'s bigotry and dogmatic disposition, we give the following from his published writings, which shows the ill nature of the man. A fiend from the fabled region of Tartarus could have no more of hate and rancor in his soul, than does this Romish oracle. Take the following as a sample, which evinces that Brownson dips his pen in gall." "Protestants do not study for truth, and are never to be presumed willing to accept it, unless it chances to be where they wish it. \* \* \* They have no sense of responsibility, no loyalty to truth, no mental chastity, no intellectual sincerity. \* \* \* They are, under the point of religion and philosophy, wholly rotten, and from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, there is no soundness in them. \* \* \* If you find a candid Protestant, you may safely conclude he lacks intelligence, as when you find an intelligent Protestant, you

may be sure he lacks candor. \* \* \* Finding the essence of Protestantism to be mere vulgar pride, — that it is a mortal disease, rather than an intellectual aberration, it is evident we are to treat it as a vice, rather than an error, and Protestants as sinners, rather than as simple unbelievers or misbelievers. \* \* \* We honor them quite too much, when we treat them as men whose heads are wrong, but whose hearts are right: the wrongness of the head is the consequence of rottenness of the heart.” These citations are from a book published about a year since by Mr. B., and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In the number of the Review for April last, the leaders of the Protestant Reformation are thus stigmatized: “They were all either renegade priests and apostate monks, or princes notorious for their vices, their crimes and brutal tyranny. There is not one of the prominent leaders of the Reformation in whom you can discover a single redeeming moral feature. Luther, Melancthon, Zuingli, Farel, Calvin, Beza, Cranmer, as well as the princes who protected them and supported their cause by their arms and their policy, were men who exhibited in their lives — at least, from the moment of their revolt against the Church, not a single Christian, and scarcely a single heathen virtue.” The man who can utter such wholesale vituperations indiscriminately against the whole Protestant world, ought not to denounce Mr. Parker as self-conceited or assumptive.”

The writer in the Repository whom I have already quoted says: —

“As it regards Mr. Parker, he undoubtedly does a

X very good work in castigating the naughty and inconsistent politicians. His irony and sarcasm come in very well while dealing with them. As it respects devotional piety, the world will never be much indebted to him for its promotion. There is too large a vein of unbelief in his nature, and it is too fully developed in his writings and teachings, to entitle him, theoretically, to be regarded as a Christian teacher. We do not by this mean to say any thing against his character. But this we do know, that a man may teach the greatest absurdities for truth, and still be a moralist. Those who regard Mr. P. as a model preacher of the Christian theory, may be somewhat mistaken. In our admiration of a man, it is well not to swallow down his errors thoughtlessly.

“As for Mr. Brownson, he is what he is. Were we a believer in election and reprobation, we should believe he was born to be damned eternally. The devil himself, according to fabulous theology, was not more of an arch apostate than is O. A. Brownson. He rebels against light, in giving utterance to his damnable heresies, and to the Anti-American principles which disgrace every number of his Review. He is an able writer, and might, if he would, do much service for the cause of humanity and the cause of revealed religion. So far as at the present time he exerts an influence, he deserves the anathemas of his countrymen. If not a Monomaniac, he knows better than to utter the contemptible sentiments to which he is constantly giving utterance. We hope his mind will yet be delivered from the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity in which it is now im

mersed, — that instead of remaining a misanthropist, liberal sentiments may once more get possession of his heart, and that he may appear, as he ought to appear, clothed in his right mind.”

In private life few men command more esteem, and indeed admiration, than Mr. Parker. As a citizen he is blameless, and many a story is told, and truly told, of his active benevolence. What he preaches he practises, and that cannot be said of all who occupy the pulpit. Let us conclude this sketch, which space compels us to cramp, with a story they tell here, which may or may not be true. In these days, however, when Mrs. Partington’s sayings are popular, it may, at least be told.

As two ancient ladies were coming out of the Music Hall, after service, one of them observed to the other, “Don’t you think Mr. Parker as great a man as Christ? I do.” “No,” replied the other, “Oh no, not so great as that — but I’ll tell you what — I think he is as great as Anti-Christ.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

OLD DIVINES. COMPARISON BETWEEN SOUTH AND LYMAN BEECHER. MR. LOVEJOY'S SUCCESSOR. DR. BEECHER'S PERSONAL APPEARANCE. FRAGMENTS OF HIS EARLY HISTORY.

VERY fond am I, now and then, of taking down from its shelf some old folio, containing the works of Baxter, Howe, Henry Smith, Chillingworth or Jeremy Taylor. I cannot explain how or why it is, but I never *can* relish the works of these worthies so keenly in modernized editions. Hot pressed paper, dainty gildings and legible types seem not to consort with their quaint matter. There are some books, indeed, that should never be read but in black letter, or in the original editions. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* is one of them; to enjoy that rare work I must have it on time-tinted yellow paper, the letters of an antique rudeness, the fly-leaves covered with crabbed autographs of former possessors; if marginal notes be appended, so much the better;—and all bound in boards—*real* oaken boards—thick, and covered with honest brown leather—its back being adorned by huge ridges, and its sides guiltless of bookbinders' "tooling." When one chances to be in a contemplative mood, such a book is a treasure.

The other day, while hunting for a stray book, I came upon a folio copy of South's sermons. Long had it lain by neglected, but now I reverently drew it from its dingy recess, and gladly renewed my acquaintance with the old English preacher. It was evening, a Sabbath evening, and the racy, pungent style of the author of the book accorded well just then with the tone of my mind, for I had on the morning of that day listened to the preaching of one who not a little resembled South. He, too, was an old divine, though, I am happy to say, not yet numbered with the past. Still he lives, though more than the allotted term of life has been granted him; and long may he yet labor, for the world has need of the services of Lyman Beecher.

Yes; Dr. Beecher reminds me of South. He has, though, more heart than that preacher, more sympathy; he has not the venomous and satiric tooth of the old renegade, if he has not so much loftiness of conception; but still the points of resemblance between them are manifold. Both of them characterize their discourses largely by wit and humor, and do not disdain to rouse their audiences occasionally by a something more perceptible than a smile. South constantly distilled his best thoughts, even in preaching, into epigrams; and Beecher flings not unfrequently the epigrams out upon his congregation. Both of them are masters of original and striking thought, amplified by numerous ideas and illustrations. I can very easily imagine Dr. Beecher giving utterance to such sentiments as the following,—the old, impotent, silver-haired sinner described as “the

broken and decrepit sensualist, creeping to the devil on all fours; a wretch so scorned, so despised, and so abandoned by all, that his very vices forsake him." Of dunces occupying prominent situations, old South says: "If owls will not be hooted at, let them keep close within the tree, and not perch upon the upper boughs." Pride he defines to have been the Devil's sin, and the Devil's ruin, and has been ever since the Devil's stratagem, who, like an expert wrestler, usually gives a man a lift before he gives him a throw." Speaking of the human heart, he says: "no one knows how much villany lodges in this little room." Now as we could imagine Dr. Beecher uttering many of these things, we could very well conceive South uttering many of the pithy aphorisms and sentiments with which Dr. Beecher flavors his sermons. But the Doctor does not print his wit, he utters it and leaves it; and most of his published papers are quite free from that with which his pulpit services abound; added to which there is a peculiar mannerism in the preacher, — humorous, sometimes covert, sly and glancing, and sometimes bold and open, which are not without their influence on his popularity.

But before I further describe Dr. Beecher's mental features, suppose we take a glance at the man himself, as he appears in the year of grace, one thousand, eight hundred and fifty-three.

Let us travel, dear reader, as far as Cambridgeport, for there, on this Sabbath morning, the Doctor is to preach. He is not just now the pastor of any particular flock, but he has been elected to fill, for a time, the



pulpit of the church in which the Rev. Mr. Lovejoy formerly officiated. Every one remembers that the latter named gentleman had to quit it, in consequence of his having advocated the repeal of the Massachusetts Liquor Law in the State House. As if to mark their disapprobation of this conduct the more strongly, the congregation installed in the vacant pulpit the Nestor of the temperance movement, Dr. Lyman Beecher. Scarcely had the voice of the defender of the traffic in intoxicating drinks ceased to sound within the sacred walls, when the tones of its most uncompromising opponent were echoed from them. A more striking exhibition of the popular sentiment on a momentous subject was never made.

We are, then, snugly secured in our seat in the church alluded to. Already is it filled, and the preacher ascends to the pulpit. Now look well at him, reader, for he is a man of mark. If you be young, daguerreotype every line and limb on the plate of your memory; for when that venerable man shall in the course of nature be resting from his labor, you may, in future days, love to recall those lineaments, and say: "I saw and heard the author of the 'Six Short Sermons.'"

Like many other men who, by indomitable energy, have achieved great triumphs, Dr. Beecher is a little man. So was Isaac Watts, so was Alexander Pope, so was Napoleon, so was Wellington. The Davids of our race, in whom lay so much power, unsuspected as well by themselves as by others, have been the greatest victors in the world's physical and moral conflicts. Yet small as the Doctor's figure is, it is well knit, close and

compact. How much vigor there yet remains in every muscle. What, then, must have been their vitality half a century ago? But the head and face — look at them. The head is large for the size of the frame which it surmounts, and it is thickly, aye, abundantly covered with iron gray hair, although, our life on it, the locks have never been anointed with bear's grease, or any of the thousand and one hair preservers that beaux and belles patronize. This hair is combed from the forehead and temples, and running toward the back of the head, it there terminates in a cluster which somewhat resembles a small full-bottomed wig of the time of the third George. The face is remarkably striking. A queer and fanciful book, recently published by Dr. Redfield, which treats of the resemblances between the faces of men and those of animals, gives parallel pictures of Dr. Beecher's face and that of a lion, and its author declares that many of the courageous, magnanimous and powerful qualities of the king of beasts belong to the man. Now, although I cannot see much resemblance between the physiognomies of the brute monarch and the Christian minister, I willingly concede that both have in common great power and considerable influence. The eyes are of light blue, with a grayish tint. The nose is large, long and rather prominent; the mouth wide, and marked all about with the lines of decision. As for the forehead, it is high and broad. The complexion is florid, remarkably so for a man who has passed his three score and ten years, and the whole expression is that of a man of vast energy, determination

and perseverance. The only man I ever saw to whom, in point of personal appearance, he bears a close resemblance, was the late Rowland Hill, and in the constitution of his mind, also, Dr. Beecher is far from unlike the venerable English Divine.

And here, as the Beecher family are more widely known than any other family assembly in these United States, I must be excused if I deviate somewhat from my usual custom, for the purpose of furnishing some account of the antecedents of its venerable head, partly drawn from his own account, which he contributed to a volume of memoirs, of the class of 1797, edited by Dr. Murdock, of New Haven, and partly from an interesting article in the American Phrenological Journal.

Lyman Beecher was born in New Haven, Connecticut, Oct. 12, 1775, and is consequently seventy-eight years of age. He drew his first breath in a dwelling which is still standing in New Haven, on the corner of George and College streets. Some ancestral traits will be of interest, at least to those curious in psychological heraldry. The Beecher blood was dashed with hypochondria. Dr. Beecher himself, his father, and his grandfather, were, in early life, great sufferers from that cause. But in each case, it was confined principally to early life, and wore out with years, leaving a serene, and cheerful old age. All his ancestors were devout and professedly religious men. Dr. Beecher's great-grandmother was the daughter of a full-blooded Welsh woman, a Roberts. Thus the blood of the Beechers received a happy mixture of Welsh blood, with its poetry and music, and its

insatiable and intolerable love of genealogy ; for no Welshman ever lived who had not a clear genealogical turnpike opened up to Adam's very front dooryard.

Dr. Beecher's own mother was a *Lyman*, a family whose blood was joyous, sparkling, hopeful, and against all rebuffs and disappointments, hoping still. He was a seven months child and extremely feeble. His mother died four days after his birth. Her sister, Mrs. Lot Benton, of North Guilford, having no children of her own, took Lyman, at about three months of age, and kept him in her family until he was fitted for college, which was about his eighteenth year.

Lot Benton was a thorough original ; a great, kind heart : hedged about at times with the affectation of scolding and ill-humor, but never was he reported, and never was he a scolding, ill-natured man. Whoever asked a kindness of him surely got it, and a good deal more besides. If one came to borrow a hoe, " why don't you have hoes of your own ; what do you hang on to your neighbors for ? Here, come back ; take the hoe, will ye ? but I suppose you never will return it, you will break it, I guess." On one occasion Lyman Beecher was driving an ox team so as nearly to graze a plough which lay upon the ground. " There, there, Lyman, you have run over that plough and broke it all to pieces." " Why, uncle Lot, I haven't touched the plough." " Well, I'd a great deal rather you had, than to have gone so near it."

The following story is told of young Lyman Beecher :

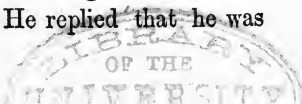
One day while gathering apples in an orchard, Uncle Lot said, " Lyman, should you like to go to college ?"

No reply was made, and the work went on. The next day, as they were busy at the same work, Lyman said, "I think I should like to go to college." Nothing more was said on either side. But the lad was forthwith prepared for studying. Two years of preparation in these days sufficed for entering college. He entered Yale College under the presidency of Dr. Dwight, in September, 1793, at the age of eighteen.

Those who know the Dr. Beecher of to-day will easily believe in this anecdote of him in his student days :

One night Mr. Beecher was awakened by a sound at his window, as if some one were drawing cloth through a broken pane of glass ; springing up, he dimly saw his clothes disappearing through the broken window ; a thief having taken a fancy to them. Waiting for no ceremonies of toilet, he dashed out after him. The rascal dropped the clothes at once, and put himself to his best speed. But Lyman was not to be easily out-run, especially when thus stripped to the race. After turning several corners, the caitiff was seized and marched back by the eager student. He ushered him into his room, compelled him to lie down on the floor by the side of his bed while he, more comfortably ensconced in the bed, lay the night long watching him, — the silence being broken only by an occasional "*lie still, sir.*"

In the morning the culprit was taken before a magistrate, who was evidently a lineal descendant of Justice Shallow. The magistrate, after hearing the particulars, asked Mr. Beecher "whether in turning the corners he lost sight of the man at all." He replied that he was



out of sight but a second, for he was close upon him. "Ah, well, if you lost sight of him *at all*, then you cannot swear to his identity," and so the man was discharged. Mr. B. met the fellow several times afterward, but could never catch his eye.

Of Dr. Beecher's earliest marriage we need not speak. His first six children were born at East Hampton, L. I., where he amused himself in the intervals of labor with fishing and hunting. He then removed to Litchfield, and there, he says, passed the most laborious portion of his life.

It was while at Litchfield that Dr. Beecher recommended *total abstinence*, as a remedy for intemperance, earlier, it is supposed, than any other one. As early as 1811, the General Association of Connecticut, had appointed a committee to report what could be done to stay the progress of intemperance. That report was made, and after lamenting the wide-spread danger, discouragingly said, that there seemed to be no remedy. Dr. Beecher immediately moved that a committee be appointed to report instantler, a remedy for intemperance. He was made chairman, and reported resolutions, recommending the immediate and entire abandonment of distilled spirits by individuals and in all families as a beverage, or as a matter of courtesy, or as an adjunct to labor. The resolution was carried, and this, it is believed, was the first step taken in the great history of Total Abstinence.

The famous six sermons upon Intemperance were first written and preached in Litchfield. A very dear friend

of Dr. Beecher, living about four miles from the church, became intemperate. This fact moved all his affection and zeal. The six sermons were born of a heart full of love and grief, and although this did not save the man whose case inspired them, they have, doubtless, saved millions of others, and are still read in almost every language in the civilized world.

In his memoir before referred to, the Doctor touchingly says:—

“In my domestic relations, my cup of mercy, though not unmingled with bitterness in the death of two beloved wives, two infants, and an adult son in the ministry, has nevertheless been filled with pure, copious and habitual enjoyment, especially in the early conversion of my children, and their blessed affection for me and usefulness in the Church of God.”

In the prime of Dr. Beecher's life, there was, it is said, in his discourses and speeches “an admirable mingling of reasoning, fact, wit, emotion and pathos. These qualities were not pre-arranged, but spontaneous; they were not in the sermon so prepared, but in the heart that prepared it.”

Thus far I have but glanced at some features of Dr. Lyman Beecher's past history. In the next chapter I shall conclude my notice of him by a sketch of a laborer of our own time.

## CHAPTER XIV.

DR. LYMAN BEECHER, CONTINUED. ANECDOTES. HIS  
TACT. REMARKS ON HIS STYLE.

FROM an early stage of Dr. Beecher's career, he was afflicted with an irritable stomach, which, at some periods, threatened to lay him aside from the ministry. And nothing but the most skilful care of his own health, enabled him, through a long life, to go through labors which seem almost incredible. At East Hampton, on Long Island, he was familiar with every bay and fishing ground, and with every cove where wild fowl resorted. At Litchfield, Ct., he resorted to the soil, without forsaking the rod and the gun, for exercise and health. In Boston, he rowed in the harbor; sawed his own wood; brought home his marketing, for the sake of the exercise of carrying a basket. Dr. Beecher became quite an adept in filing and setting saws. Much of his studying was done over his saw, or with file in hand. On one such occasion he said, "The way to write easy is to get all your thinking done first, and then let the hot metal out into the mould of your plan," having in his mind the idea of metal-casting. When the weather was bad, the Doctor resorted to his cellar, where several loads of sand were stored, which were lustily shovelled from one side of the cellar



to the other — like many metaphysical disputes and casuistries — sand at best, and by discussion only changed in place. He walked quick, worked quick, thought quick, and wrote quick. His absorption in thought gave rise to absent-mindedness and to forgetfulness, frequently to ludicrous stories. On several occasions he entered his neighbors' houses in Boston, for his own. Hundreds of stories related of the Doctor are mere fictions, or ascriptions to him of things belonging to other men. He once said, "if I should write my own life, the first volume should contain the things which I did not do and did not say." Nevertheless, not a few are authentic.

In a trip along the coast of Connecticut, in a small craft, for his health, being detained by baffling winds, it was in the midst of church service, on a Sabbath morning, that he landed at a village where only the clergyman knew him. He was in full sea-rig. His entrance to the audience-room attracted no attention. But when, during the prayer, after sermon, he walked up the aisle, and began to ascend the pulpit steps, all eyes were on him. The young people tittered, and the *tithing men* began to look authoritative, as if business was on hand. The officiating clergyman, at the close of his prayer, cordially shook him by the hand, to the growing surprise of spectators, — not lessened by the Doctor's rising to make some "additional remarks." "When I began," we once heard the Doctor say, "I could see all the good and sober people looking rather grave at such an appearance, while all the young people winked at each other, as if they expected some sort. But it was not long

before I saw the old folks begin to look up and smile, and the young folks to look sober." If any one has heard Dr. Beecher, in one of his best moods, in an extemporaneous outburst, they can well imagine with what power an application would come from him, and how the sudden transitions of feeling, and the strange contrasts between his weather-beaten appearance and a seaman's garb, and his impassioned eloquence, would heighten the effect. When he concluded, he turned to the pastor and said: "How could you have such a grand sermon without any application?" "I wrote out the body of the sermon, meaning to extemporize the application, but after you came in it was scared out of my head."

The finest efforts of his mind are not in his writings, but were unexpectedly thrown out in the inspiration of speech, or in conversation. Many apothegms and condensed sentiments, if recorded, would become popular proverbs.

When about seventy-five years of age, he spent a fortnight in the eastern part of Maine. A party of gentlemen, at Calais, went with him, some thirty miles up a series of lakes to Indian territories. When about to embark upon a chain of lakes in the birch canoes, the Indian guide, Etienne, rather objected to so old a man attempting the adventure, fearing that he would give out. The Doctor rowed with the best of the youngsters; caught more trout than all the party together, and returned each day from the various tramps, in the lead; ate his fish on a rock, with a sea-biscuit for a trencher, and fingers for knives and forks; slept on the

ground upon hemlock branches under the tent, and, at length, the Indian guide went from the extreme of depreciation to the highest expression of admiration in his power, saying, "Ah! old man, all Indian!"

While residing on Long Island, in early life, he was returning home just at evening from a visit to old Dr. Woolworth;—seeing what he thought, in the dark, to be a rabbit by the road-side, a little ahead, he reasoned with himself: "They are rather tender animals—if the fellow sits still till I come up, I think I could hit him with these books," a goodly bundle of which he had in his handkerchief. Hit him, he surely did; only it proved to be not a rabbit, but a skunk. The logical consequences followed, and he returned to his family in anything but the *odor* of sanctity. In after life, being asked why he did not reply to a scurrilous attack which had been made upon him, the Doctor answered: "I discharged a quarto, once, at a skunk—and I then made up my mind never to try it again."

During the prevalence of a revival in his church, in Boston, the number of persons desiring religious conversation was so great, sometimes amounting to several hundreds, that he was accustomed to employ younger clergymen to assist him. On one occasion a young Andoverian was conversing with a person who believed herself to be converted, within the Doctor's hearing. The young man was probing the grounds of her evidence, and among other questions, was overheard-asking the lady if she "thought that she was willing to be damned for the glory of God." Instantly starting up,

the Doctor said to him: "What was that you were asking?" "I was asking her if she should be willing to be damned for the glory of God." "Well, sir, would *you* be willing?" "Yes, sir, I humbly hope I should be." "Well, then, sir, you *ought* to be damned." And, afterwards, he took occasion to enlighten him to a better theology.

Anecdotes and incidents of this kind might be multiplied *ad infinitum*, but they would be more in place in a regular biography, than in a mere outline sketch, such as this professes to be. So quitting reminiscent material, let me come to the man of to-day — to the Lyman Beecher of eighteen hundred and fifty-three.

And by chance we behold him as he is threading his way through the bustle of Washington street. There he goes sturdily along, scorning the aid of walking stick or umbrella; curious people now and then turning to throw a glance at his hale, hearty-looking face, and gray hairs. "That's Harriet Beecher Stowe's father," says one. "There goes the father of Henry Ward Beecher," remarks another. "That is the man who wrote the 'Six Short Sermons,'" murmurs a third, and so on he goes, noticed by many, seeming to notice none. You see now that his eye is not dim, and that his natural force is not much abated, although seventy-eight summer suns, and the same number of wintry snows, have shone upon and drifted around that venerable head. Neither have his mental energies greatly diminished.

To see Dr. Beecher to advantage out of the pulpit we should notice him at a meeting of one of the many

committees of which he is a member — supposing a difficulty should have occurred. Dr. Beecher intuitively sees where that difficulty lies, and his strong energetic mind grapples with it at once. By a few brief words he disentangles the thread of the subject, makes it as clear as daylight, and deprives it in an instant of all its difficulty. There has been no waste of words, no hesitation, but action. It is Columbus setting the egg on its end over again, and as the companions of the illustrious Genoese stared at each other in stupid wonder at the simplicity of the operation, so perhaps the committee marvel that they never saw the subject from the Doctor's point of view before. It is this practical talent which makes Dr. Beecher so valuable in working out moral reforms. His strong common sense, his astuteness and his great sagacity, stand him in better stead than the embellishments of poetry, or the graces of rhetoric. Above all, his principles are uncompromising. Fearless of opposition, he only studies what is right, and the right he struggles for manfully. And yet there is no assumption of superiority, although he speaks as one whose long experience entitles him to be considered an authority.

We have intimated that the sayings of Dr. Beecher are frequently very quaint. For instance, when preaching once on justification by works, he remarked: "If I kill a man to-day, and save a man from drowning to-morrow, will the saving the one do away with the guilt of killing the other?" Again, "God will not keep those who do not strive to keep themselves. The devil keeps those who

serve him. Cannot God keep those who serve him?" And he asks in another discourse: "Why hang your hopes on a spider's thread, when you have a cable?" And when speaking of the doctrine of restitution, he asks: "Why go to school in hell to be fitted for heaven?" We might adduce many such South-like passages, but enough has been quoted.

But not only is Dr. Beecher quaint as a preacher; he does not dislike the weapons of wit, and occasional satire, and he can avail himself of both with terrible power. When rumsellers are his adversaries, he is a fearful hand, a very Sioux at skinning them — always is he willing to scalp the antagonist to his views on moral and religious truth, either on the platform or from the press. This is his *forte*, a power to skin an error and lay it bare to a popular mind and audience. He does not descend to the nicer shades of metaphysic distinction, although all his published works show a power to do so. He stands by and upon the eternal principles and distinctions between right and wrong. He never passes out of sight of his audience, and therefore to them his logic appears to descend upon his adversary with crushing force. His hapless opponent is like an unfortunate being strapped and bound to a revolving wheel, lanced by some cruel instrument; for, as with most men of Dr. Beecher's order of mind, satire and logic are one. Many an effort has been made to crush him, but as some enemy once said of him to a lady: "The worst of it is, you see, madam, we can bring nothing against him. If we had but something we could crush him directly." The worst indeed!

But on the contrary, a character known, enthusiastic, genuine, a character always identified with love to the people and efforts for their salvation and benefit.

Is it any wonder then that the man always has had and still has great power over the minds of his audiences? Figure him, as he stands in the pulpit, or on the platform, a human rock, if you attempt to move him; a man who will smile at all opposing clamor, a man whom opposition affects as much as petrifying water affects a stone, clothing and casing in more determined resolution. An eye blue as June sky, a complexion full of the Saxon temperament, a mouth compressed and full of meaning. A terrible opponent this where all these varieties blend to make the character — invulnerable.

I may well call the subject of my present sketch the man of action, for to the pulpit and the platform his energies are not confined.

The press is another world in which he has moved and spoken well and efficiently throughout Great Britain, as well as America. He is well known by the "Six Short Sermons" and by other works needless to name here. All his works abound in the same plain and forcible eloquence that makes him famous among modern speakers. A man of action, I said, preëminently a man of action; a man who must be doing, and who sees instantly through the meaning of the thing to be done. In brief, he may be generalized beneath one characterization; he strikes all who see and hear him, as eminently real; a man abominating, fastidiously abominating all show. All his

faults are the faults of an earnest man. He has, perhaps, no sympathy with little sorrows. Like Dr. Johnson, he would, perhaps, be able to expend no tears on the widowed griefs of a fashionable lady, if a poor woman left destitute with half a dozen children claimed his attention. He has struggled so heartily with the world's difficulties himself, has so made those difficulties of life to retire before him that he cannot feel that poverty is the chief ill to any man. He leads so almost stoical an existence as far as world-comforts go, that it is not wonderful if he should cherish a true Diogenian contempt for all mournings and bewailings over the loss of them; and some of those who see this in the distance, are apt to suppose a hard man, until a nearer view reveals an eye not so full of sternness as tenderness, a tongue gentle to every modulation of expression, and a heart an overflowing fountain of generous impulses, nor perhaps, altogether cut off from the reservoir of tears.

Although Dr. Beecher has arrived at that period of life, when, did he consult his own ease alone, he might feel himself entitled to indulge in well-earned repose, he scorns such, to him, "inglorious ease," and, not abating "one jot of heart and hope," still labors on, zealously and effectively, for the good of mankind. His name is, and forever will be linked with the great cause of temperance, just as Washington's is associated with the deliverance of his country, or Franklin's with the discovery of the identity of lightning and electricity. And though, to slightly alter the language of Foster, in the coming time, new and brilliant stars may appear in the



firmament of this great moral reform, all eyes will pensively, involuntarily turn to the lingering light on the horizon, when the greater luminary shall have disappeared. But long may it be ere it shall be said of our venerable teacher, as of others : —

Gone ! are they gone who brightly shone !

Oh ! gloomy, chilly night ?

Now left alone, we deeply moan

Their much lamented light.

The prophets, too ! the prophets too !

Why do they cease to cry ?

Will not kind Heaven the lamp renew ?

Must, too, the prophets die ?

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## CHAPTER XV.

JOHN OVERTON CHOULES, D. D. EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.  
A LIBRARY TALK. THE CHURCH AT NEWPORT. GENERAL REMARKS.

It must be now over thirty years since, when at a "Debating and Literary Society" in the ancient city of Bristol, to which, as a great favor I was admitted, why or wherefore, I now know not, for at the "Debates" I fancy I must have much resembled a bewildered baby.

I say, it must have been thrice ten years since that I first saw the gentleman whose name will be found at the head of this chapter. I had not, at that time, completed my "schooling," and he was a student in the Bristol Baptist Academy, of which the well-known Dr. Ryland was Principal; and I very well remember that among the sturdiest and most successful of the Debaters who were, for the most part young gentlemen with more ardor than judgment, and who struggled rather for the glory of victory than for the sake of truths, was a youth named Choules. The debates were varied by lectures on various branches of science, and for me these possessed a greater and far more abiding interest. Should the eyes of the subject of my sketch ever rest on this page, it will doubtless recall those early days, when such as Withers, Guppy, and himself disputed; and when men like Millard lectured on his favorite science of Entomology. That eccentric old gentleman has long since gone to where the insects he used to talk about have by this time made a closer acquaintance with his framework, than he ever did with the bodies of their ancestors. But I fancy I am shooting wide of my mark, and so let me come back to my immediate topic.

The days of school passed by; I no longer had the opportunities of visiting the "Inquirer Society" as it was called, and consequently saw no more of the Academy student. Indeed he had entirely passed from my recollection; the great waves of youthful occupation in Surgery, Hospital, and Dissecting room having washed from the shifting sands of the beach of memory all

traces of what had been inscribed thereupon. But fifteen or twenty years after, like one of Mr. Wilkin Micawber's opportunities, the Divinity Student turned up again; and, as is usual in such cases, when and where he was least expected.

In the year 1844 or 5, I forget which, exactly, I was dining at the hospitable table of Thomas Colley Grattan, Esq., at that period Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at the Port of Boston, in company with Mr. N. P. Willis, Madame Calderon de la Barca, and some other well-known writers; the host himself being among the most distinguished, when, dinner being half over, a new comer was announced. Evidently he was a privileged friend of the family, for his arrival only caused a slight stir, and a pleasant excitement, in the midst of which there came into the dining-room a gentleman dressed in clerical attire, with a short, stout, comfortable frame of body, and apparently, a frame of mind to suit, for he possessed one of the most genial and good humored faces, blent with a certain shrewdness withal, that I ever remember to have looked upon. I saw at once that he was a brother Englishman, and if there had been in my mind any doubt whatever on that point, the first "Bristolian" tones he uttered would have dispelled it in an instant.

It seemed that I too, as an Englishman, had not been unrecognized, for on occasionally looking at the gentleman in black, I perceived that his sharp, keen eye glanced curiously over his gold spectacles at me, as if to make out who and what *I* was. A chance word or two drop-

ped in the course of conversation revealed the fact that we were each of us natives of the same city in England, and more than this, in certain "Pen and Ink Sketches" which I was at that time publishing in the *Boston Atlas*, I had mentioned the names of several persons, John Foster, Robert Hall, and others, with whom he had been on terms of personal intimacy. Under such circumstances it is not at all remarkable that an intimacy should speedily have been established, for when natives of the same land meet casually on a foreign soil, the frigid barriers of etiquette are soon thawed down. Especially must such be the case when men like him of whom I am writing are concerned, for I know of no man who possesses more companionable qualities, or whose breast contains a heart more alive to all the finer instincts of humanity. Even now, as *I* write this, and while *he* is far away somewhere, in Commodore Vanderbilt's Yacht, I cannot help thinking that he may probably be taking a genial cigar with some friendly Turk in his Kiosk, overlooking the Golden Horn, and drinking sherbet in a quite at home sort of way; or probably, (for he never goes anywhere where he does not pick up a *protégé* or an old acquaintance,) he may in the exercise of his clerical duties be baptizing some dearly beloved brother, a convert perhaps, in the Bosphorus.

Doctor J. O. Choules was, at the time I speak of, minister over a church and congregation at Jamaica Plains, and there I frequently had the pleasure and the privilege of hearing him preach. Since then I have heard him discourse in some of the chief London pulpits, where

he was always very popular ; and the last time I was present was when he preached in England, in his native city to a crowded congregation, which to him must have been an intensely interesting one, inasmuch as amongst it were many of his early friends and associates.

But the best opportunities I ever had of hearing and judging of Dr. Choules's pulpit talents was in his own church in Newport, Rhode Island, where he still holds a pastorate. Suppose reader we travel thither, in imagination, and call upon the "friend of other days," for we desire to introduce you to the man as well as to the minister. Unfortunately for us, he is at this moment from home, most probably engaged in some parochial duties, but we meet a hearty welcome, and being privileged, are installed in the Library. And be it known that it is a library worthy the name, Dr. Choules being a book lover of the first degree.

Charles Lamb, in one of his fascinating essays, says : "I dream away my life in others' speculations. I love to lose myself in other men's minds. When I am not walking, I am reading ; I cannot sit and think. Books think for me."

I am, just at this moment, much inclined to dream away an hour or two in others' speculations also. It is a dark, stormy evening without ; the driving, dashing rain patters against the windows, and the wind makes mournful music among the elm-boughs without. But within, all is light and peace. The ruddy blaze leaps up, and golden vistas, and glittering caverns, and fiery dragons gleam in the glowing coals. On the table stands one of

those green-shaded lamps which studious men love, and all around us are books.

Books from the floor to the ceiling ; books on shelves over doors ; books in niches ; books on the Oxford reading-table ; books on the bureau-cover ; books on the sofa ; books on the floor, and heaped up confusedly in corners ; books on the mantle-piece ; books, indeed, wherever one can be conveniently or inconveniently put. Next the floor are stately old folios, some in ancient veritable boards, with huge ridges on their broad backs, brazen hasps on their covers, and some rare ones, to which are attached links of the broken chain which once confined them to the shelves of some suspicious old library. Over these are the quartos ; then comes a row of octavos ; and the higher we go the less bulky are the tomes. But whether they be big or little, thick or thin, ancient or modern, we, like Southey, hail them as “ never-failing friends,” and claim boon companionship with each and all.

How luxurious ! A quiet evening, a heart at peace with all the world, and for our companions the embodied thoughts of the great and wise of all times. As I sit in my easy chair, I can, by my “ so potent power,” summon around me a glorious company of immortals, and become in a certain sense a necromancer, since, in their works, I hold converse with and take counsel of the dead. Pleasantest of superstitions this ! Surrounded by books, I ask for no other associates ; even the presence of the dearest friend just now would be an intrusion on my voiceful yet speechless solitude.

The library in which I now sit is just such an one as I am sure Elia would have rejoiced to be imprisoned in. It belongs to one whose eyes twinkle at the sight of black-letter, and who regards with reverence a "scarce copy." An Elzivir to him is a more excellent thing than the gaudiest gilded thing that ever issued from fashionable publisher's shelf. Yet hath he a love, too, for choice modern literature; and dainty poetry delighteth him. I mean not so much Tennysonian jingle as the solid stuff of such as Dryden, and Ben Jonson, and Marlowe, and such like true poets, men whose sterling literary coin had the ring as well as the shine. Well, such a library as such a book-lover could collect with infinite pains is, during a life-time, a *pro tempore* mine, and it is just such an one to enjoy; for although national collections of books are invaluable, one cannot be said to luxuriate in them as we do in a snug, well-assorted chamber of learning. For my part I never could read to advantage in big halls lined with learning. A Brobdignagian Bodleian is well enough to sit and quote in; but for enjoyability, commend me to a silent snuggery like this.

So wrapped up am I in "measureless content," that I fancy, if the cricket chirping on the hearth were to become a visible fairy, and offer me a crown, I do not think I would accept the offer. I do not sigh for greatness of that kind, but kings *have* sighed for learned repose. Stay: here in this splendid fourth edition of Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy," which I handle lovingly, we read that "King James, in 1605, when he came to see our University of Oxford, and, amongst

other edifices, now went to view that famous library, renewed by Sir Thomas Bodley, in imitation of Alexander, at his departure brake out into that noble speech : ‘ If I were not a King, I could be an University man ; *and if it were so that I was a prisoner, if I might have my wish, I would desire to have no other prison than that library, and to be chained together with so many good authors.*’ ” Had his Majesty been blessed with such company, he would have fared far better than among the courtiers who surrounded him.

The library I am now pleasantly prisoned in is peculiarly rich in works on theology. But these do not crowd out history, or biography, or science, or learning indeed of any sort. As I sit, I see, or seem to see, looking out from the backs of the books, the spirits of Shakspeare, Cervantes, Milton, Jeremy Taylor, Bunyan, De Foe, and hosts of other bookmen. As the fire flashes now and then, the books seem endued with vitality, and, with eyes half closed and dreaming, I regard them as actual living things, as brains Pythagorized into books.

And how strange it is to observe the company in which some of these books find themselves ! Just opposite is Hannah More cheek-by-jowl with Albert Smith’s “ Ballet Girl ; ” and Mrs. Opie is as close as close can be to the same sprightly author’s “ Gent.” Lord Byron is leaning familiarly on Southey, apparently enjoying his “ Table-Talk ; ” and Jeremy Taylor, in a falling position, is supported by an original Joe Miller. The author of “ Paradise Lost ” has got close to Robert Montgomery’s “ Satan ; ” and Henry Smith, the silver-



tongued preacher of Elizabeth's time, is nearly crushed by "Five Hundred Skeletons of Sermons" and twenty-three bulky "Pulpits." The fiercest polemics and the meekest Christians, lamb-and-lion-like, stand harmoniously on one shelf; reviewers and victims placidly survey each other from opposite corners; High Churchmen and Low Churchmen join in goodly rows; Bonner and Cranmer dwell together in unity; William Penn and Napoleon Bonaparte are almost arm-in-arm; Cromwell and Charles are at peace; and Lord Chief Justice Jeffries seems greatly to enjoy the society of his many victims. Here kings meet their subjects without etiquette, and Alfred the Great and Bamfylde Moore Carew tell each other their widely different stories; Nelson and Fighting Fitzgerald fight their battles o'er again; and GEORGE WASHINGTON, in close contiguity to George the Third, appears to be on the best of terms with that stubborn old gentleman.

I have, almost at random, selected a book which lies within my arm's reach; and lo! here are some thoughts about books, which, had I read them before, would have saved me from the above speculations. And by whom is this following written? Why, by none other than the owner of this very library. Hear what he says, and if you do not admire its book-loving spirit, I pray you proceed no farther in my company. "I never," writes my friend, "enter a library without a feeling of reverence for the company in which I am placed. I regard a volume as the very spirit of its author, the actual being of the man who thought it, wrote it, left it, and sent it forth

for all its purposes of might and mercy." And again : " What strange reflections rush upon the mind of a thinking man when he gazes upon the shelves of a richly-stored library ! For instance, what queer juxtaposition will authors find upon tables and shelves ! Men who in life were sadly hostile and divided in judgment and affection, here sit down side by side. The lion and the lamb, the vulture and the dove, keep quiet company. I am now gazing upon Featley's " Dippers Dipt " and Paget's " Heresiography " on a table, while directly over them I see Keach and Kiffin, Tombs and the venerable Jesse. These men wrote and controverted for all coming ages ; and yet, no doubt, they are all happy and united in fraternal love in that heaven where the spirits of just men made perfect are delivered from error, prejudice, and rancor. There, on that shelf, is that glorious folio, " Reliquiæ Baxterianæ," and a few niches off, the " Bloody Assizes " and the life of that arrant scoundrel, George, Lord Jefferies, the supple tool of all the cruelties of James the Second. Lloyd's " Worthies of Charles the First's Reign " are cheek-by-jowl with Lord Nugent's capital " Life of John Hampden " and Foster's " Lives of the Statesmen of the Commonwealth." Then some books seem to get together by the principle of elective affinity. Dr. Chalmers's works will keep close by Andrew Fuller, and Jay's Sermons will be found very near to old Jeremiah Burroughs."

Mark, gentle reader, how delicate, yet how sharp, is the satire in this presumed companionship of Chalmers and Fuller, and Jay and Burroughs ; for students well

enough know that the Scotch divine was not a little indebted for some of his best things to the sturdy Baptist, and that Burroughs's works form, in many instances, the staple of William Jay's discourses.

Go into public or private libraries, reader, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred you will find a large proportion of learned rubbish. Such is not the case here. Of such literary lumber *this* library is swept and garnished. Let me, Jack-Horner-like, select a few "plums."

Here is a treasure-house of sweets, a mine all sparkling with precious stones; and yet homely-enough-looking is the casket which enshrines the gems, like the rough jerkin which frequently covers a noble heart. It is the bulky tome of Adams, who was at once the philosopher, poet, and orator of the Church. Take William Shakespeare, Jeremy Taylor, and Robert Hall, string their separate beauties, pearl-like, on a golden thread, and then you will have something like a conception of the glowing style of Thomas Adams.

Another ancient volume attracts our itching fingers. Not long had the printing-press been at work in the old times when these black-letter pages first came into the world, bearing their treasures with them. A noble specimen of ancient typography this: broad margins, solid-looking columns, and red initial letters. Hundreds of years have passed since the rude press stamped these almost immortal characters, yet they are sharp and black as though they had been "pulled" but yesterday. On the margins are other characters, brown and rusty,

but legible enough. Here and there certain portions of the text are under-scored, and brief annotations are placed opposite. In whose writing are these marginal references? No other hand than that of Philip Melancthon rested on these pages, and no other face than his bent over them. I almost fancy that "meek and mild" Reformer's spirit is near me as I touch the very paper which once he touched. Verily, there is a charm, a species of papyro-magnetism, in sheets which the hand of genius and piety has consecrated by physical contact!

I know well enough that I am coveting my neighbor's goods; but I feel strongly inclined to lay my appropriative "claws" on certain thin volumes which occupy a certain corner of this library. Were I to filch Mrs. Hutchinson's trial because of its scarcity, I fear me that the literary larceny would end in a trial in which I should take a leading part. The abstraction of any of these exceedingly rare volumes of Early Histories of the New England States might consign me to the State prison, and the fact of their having been a churchman's property might possibly deprive me of the benefit of clergy. No; I will be content to look and long, and thank my stars that I have profited by these famous lines, whose author is, I regret to say, unknown. Would that all others beside myself were influenced by his "utterances:"

"Steal not this book, my honest friend,  
For fear the gallows should be your end,  
And when yonder the Lord will say:  
'Where's the book you stole away?'"

Less attractive in externals are the russet volumes before which I now stand, than many of their modern neighbors who flaunt in all the glories of scarlet and green, and gold; but oh! what mines of untold wealth lie between the covers of these curious little quartos and duodecimos! How quaintly seductive are the old-fashioned title-pages; how enticing the type; how beautiful to a schoolman's eye the rude wood-cuts which seem to have been hacked, not cut, out of the wood; how astonishingly delightful the copper "effigies." As I gaze on each and all, I am no longer a dweller in this book-multiplication age; but by a miracle time has rolled back, and, wrapped in a sad-colored cloak, topped with a steeple-crowned hat, and adorned with ruffles, I am standing at the window of old John Dunton, whose shop in the "Poultry" bears the sign of the Black Raven, gazing at his "Bloody Assizes" just out, and eyeing critically the portraits of martyrs prefixed to that singular production, who, we are told by an inscription beneath, "all dyed in faith." I ramble, too, about "Sainte Powle's" church-yard, and drop into the "Sun and Bible," or "The Gunne," in Fleet street, or "The Angel;" for in those times signs were not peculiar to hostelries. But this day-dream would seduce me too far from my more immediate subject; so I would fain return to this nook of the study where, as elder brethren of literature, Puritan Fathers, Non-conformists, old travellers, theologians, and history-writers, stand gravely side by side.

Talk of modern illustrated works! Why, looking on

some superb elephant folios which quietly repose on this Oxford table, I imagine that we have not made so great a progress in book-decoration as some would have us believe. Here is "Bath," a series of views of the city of Bladud and Beau Nash, by Nattes; and of other parts of England, by Smirke and Loutherbouurg, which are perfect of their kind. They are colored with the greatest care, and are equal to the original water-color drawings. And here, too, is that costly work, a work which could only have been produced under governmental patronage as this was: "An Illustrated Record of the Important Events of the Annals of Europe." I question if such another copy as the one before me can be found in all America. Only by a rare chance came it into the possession of its present owner: a duplicate of it will be vainly sought for, save in noble and great public libraries; and even when found in such, it forms a feature.

I now open a splendid imperial quarto edition of the Life of Nelson, profusely illustrated by some enthusiastic collector, with all relating to the great English Admiral. A thousand sources must have been ransacked, a thousand books mutilated, in order to contribute plates of persons and places to this precious collection. It must have been the labor of a life as well as a labor of love, the illustrating of this volume, which is absolutely *unique*.

Magnificent is this copy of Barrington's Memoirs, a presentation-copy from Sir Jonah; and almost perfect the Cromwellian collection. This latter assemblage of all relating to the great Protector is the most perfect,

perhaps, extant; a pretty sure indication that the collector is a bit of hero-worshipper, a thick-and-thin admirer of England's greatest man.

But if I go on, I shall write a catalogue, and pen a panegyric, instead of gossiping in a desultory way about books in general. Yet must I not omit to glance at the works of Bishop Brownrigg, Franke, Donne, Hooker, Jackson, Bull, Reynolds, Clerk, Taylor, and of Perkins, Robert Harris, Ball, Baxter, Howe, Flavel, Owen, Caryl, and cropped-eared Prynne. Nor can I refrain from peeping into certain cases containing precious autographs, and glancing with candle over-head, connoisseur fashion, at the choice paintings which adorn the bits of space on the walls.

Of these, there is one by Franke, a "St. John Preaching in the Wilderness," a bit of exquisite coloring; a cabinet head of Shakspeare, an undoubted copy of Vandyke. This precious gem of art lay for one hundred and sixty years in the family of one of the early New England settlers, and was presented by a descendant to the owner. Many a tempting offer has been made him for this effigy of the great bard by the great painter; but he is a collector of such matters for love, not lucre, so he quietly listens to all proposals, and negatives them with an appreciative smile.

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It is Sabbath morning, and a glorious morning is it in the "leafy month of June." From a height overlooking the Atlantic, where I stand drinking in with ever new delight the breezes that have swept over thousands

of miles of water, I hear the sound of "church-going bells" that swing from steeple, tower, and turret in the ancient town below. Descending, I join the good people who are taking their way to one or another of the places of worship, and soon arrive at a Gothic structure of large proportions whose tower stands boldly and picturesquely up — a pretty and striking feature in the landscape, as it appears from the sea. Let us enter Dr. Choules's church, for such it is. It is large, spacious and comfortable. A fine organ faces the pulpit, in which stands already the pastor who is giving out a hymn.

And very seldom have I heard a hymn better read — read with so much feeling, such a just appreciation of the meaning of the author. It is sung, and then a chapter is read, also very beautifully, and this is a great thing, for what can be so afflicting and annoying as a Bible extract badly read. And yet, how often are we compelled to endure such misery. Now follows a prayer which is calm, solemn and truly devotional, then another hymn is sung, and now comes the sermon.

It is earnest, argumentative, practical, and unmistakably the composition of one who has drank deeply from those "pure wells of English undefiled," the works of the good old Divines. There is no surface-work, no thin plating of gold leaf over a mass of base metal; all is sterling and of a true mintage. Like most of the Doctor's sermons it abounds in pungent and pithy aphorisms, things which stick to the memory and often and often recur, long after the sermon has been delivered. The preacher speaks as one having authority, and his enlarged



and extensive knowledge of the world and of humanity in its various phases, stand him in good stead in the sacred desk. Many of his sermons are models of composition; solid, sound, and scriptural. Our preacher has no liking for the religious "shams" of the day, and when there is a necessity, he scruples not to denounce them. Delivered, as his discourses are, with great fervor and power, they seldom fail of making a deep impression, and the prosperity of his church, of which he has more than once been pastor, is the best proof of the success of his endeavors to promote their spiritual prosperity.

Few men in the Baptist denomination, nor indeed in any other, are better known than is Dr. Choules. He is an universal favorite, and his enlarged liberality of opinion doubtless contributes to this feeling. No one can be less liable to the charge of bigotry than himself. While he defends his own opinions stoutly, he never attacks, and is always courteous towards the thinkings of others. The satirical maxim of Emerson, "Difference from me is the measure of absurdity" is not his. He regards the right of other men to think on religious matters, differently from himself, but his own ground he keeps well guarded, and will not bate an inch of it.

Dr. Choules is well known both in this country and in his native land as a fine scholar and an elegant and successful author. His work on the United States is a standard text book. Other works we might mention, but it is not necessary. He is a popular lecturer, the series of addresses on Cromwell having received the high

commendation of such a man as Daniel Webster. He has edited magazines and religious newspapers, and to his teachings have been entrusted the sons of some of the first men in our community. Ever anxious to benefit those who require aid, he has always opened his purse and used his influence to assist struggling talent. No one who ever needed his assistance applied in vain for it. Indeed, he has been generous to a fault, or he might now have been among the wealthiest of his class. Anything mean or narrow is utterly foreign to his nature, and none should know this better than the writer. But lest I should be suspected of penning an eulogy, which I am not, I will close by simply remarking, that, as a pastor, a scholar, a man and a minister, very few persons, if any, surpass in geniality, soundness, sincerity, and expansive benevolence John Overton Choules.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

REMINISCENCE OF LANT CARPENTER, D. D. VISIT TO  
FEDERAL STREET CHURCH. THE LATE DR. CHANNING,  
DR. EZRA S. GANNETT.

“For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;  
*He can't be wrong whose life is in the right,*”

thought I, as I entered the Federal-street church a few Sabbath mornings since, — Pope's well-known couplet

chiming in my mind. In my young days I had been taught to shun an Unitarian church as I would a "play-house," which was about the next worse place to Tophet itself in the estimation of the very good and very orthodox "old folks at home." However, like the young fish, who went to the baited hook just because the maternal trout told it not to, I would sometimes steal away to a certain Lewins Mead meeting-house, whose pulpit was in those days occupied by a very celebrated Unitarian clergyman, or minister, as such is termed in the old country, the distinctive appellation of clergyman being exclusively applied to preachers of the established church.

As the English Unitarian minister to whom I allude was one of the most popular of his denomination, in Great Britain, and as he is well known by repute on this side of the Atlantic, I fancy that an incidental sketch of him may be welcome to many by whom his character and genius is held in deep veneration. I allude to the Rev. Dr. Lant Carpenter, for many years the eminent pastor of the Unitarian church in Bristol. During the period when he held that pastorate, some other pulpits of the city I have named were filled by very distinguished divines, chief among whom I may mention Robert Hall, John Ryland, and William Thorpe. These gentlemen fully appreciated, as indeed they could not help doing, the genius and learning of Dr. Carpenter, but his creed was a fatal bar against anything like friendly communion with him. As in most other things, the Bristolians were and are among the most illiberal and bigoted in matters pertaining to religion, and to attend an Unitarian chapel

was quite enough to set the seal of perdition on him or her who should be guilty of so heterodox a proceeding. Therefore, Dr. Carpenter found every Sunday an "audience fit though few;" but his hearers prized their pastor not a little, and valued his teachings at a no slight estimate.

In the matter of personal appearance, Dr. Carpenter was striking. He was a little man with a remarkably large head, one which instinctively made you think of an encyclopedia. Seldom have I seen a cranium so expansive, yet so well balanced in its proportions as was his. Very slightly covered with hair, its "developments," as some might call them, were quite apparent. The best manner in which I can give the reader some idea of the shape of his head and face combined, is to request him or her to reverse the popular notion of the similarity of the late Louis Phillippe's head and face to a pear. In the case of the monarch the stem of the fruit was uppermost, the narrowest part corresponding to the forehead, and the broadest to the lower portion of the face. In Dr. Carpenter's face, the breadth was above, and a long peaked chin terminated the visage inferiorly. He had, I think, a pair of the clearest, calmest, most contemplative blueish gray eyes that I ever saw, — their mild and benevolent expression winning favor for their owner from even the bitterest opponents of his faith, whenever they came into personal association with him; but this was seldom, for Carpenter loved not strife, and the peaceful pursuits of theology or science, (for he was a profound natural philosopher,) had more charms for him than the

bickerings of the platform, or the controversies of Christians, indeed, in any shape. Not that he shrank from either avowal or defence of his own peculiar doctrines, as his correspondence with John Foster and Robert Hall sufficiently testifies, but his gentle nature was not fitted to endure the "stife of tongues." Much does it speak in his favor, that in the city of Bristol, where his followers were indeed but "two or three," and where Unitarianism was held in greater abhorrence than infidelity itself; where not the vestige of charity's mantle was thrown over the principles of its followers, that the man himself was regarded with a no common veneration. And when the tidings of his sad and mysterious death arrived from Italy, a thrill went through the entire community, such only as is felt when a great and good man departs.

Dr. Carpenter's preaching was of a severely simple order. It might be said of him that he could not build the house of great conclusions on the sands of common report and familiar truths; he could not be content with shows and seemings, even of the clearest and fullest form; he was not to be satisfied with the shells awarded serious thinkers by the moral monkeys of the world. He weighed each portion of merchandise; rang each piece of mental coin; scrutinized each vote tendered for truth. A proposition uttered to him, the first effect was, not belief but inquiry; a fact stated, and he "asked questions." Prevailing opinions, received theories, common customs were fair matters, he thought, for examination; many of them he found, alas, for *post mortem* examination! And the things that were to be discovered to be true and genuine,

were not the goal of his investigations, — they could not be received as ultimate realities ; they were surfaces, counters, windows, locks, — indicating, representing, revealing, opening truth, which to him was always “ the great deep,” “ the true riches,” “ the inner room,” “ the hid treasure.” The process was, of course, slow, but the results were blessed ; and he might well “ like his mind for its necessity of seeking the abstraction upon every subject.” Such a man’s life is to be estimated according to the number, — not of his nights and days, his eatings and drinkings, his walkings and restings, but his thoughts and feelings, his ponderings and solitudes, “ the visions of his head,” and “ the searchings of his heart.”

The death of Dr. Carpenter had much about it of the solemn, — as indeed death always has, — and of the mysterious. Too close application had, in all probability, produced that peculiar condition of the brain to which all intensely studious men are liable. Excessive mental toil caused Southey, Scott, Moore, and many other great writers to feel, as Swift felt and expressed it, like a tree dying at the top. And so it was with Lant Carpenter. His friends perceived with sorrow dark shadows often pass across that hitherto bright and unclouded mind, and soon it became evident that the only chance of his ultimate recovery was absence from all labor and change of scene. He went to Italy, and hopes of recovery were entertained ; but one night, whilst his bark was gliding through the Mediterranean, he was suddenly missed. Whether, in a moment of aberration, he had precipitated

himself into its depths, or had accidentally fallen overboard, can now be never known. In silence and alone he passed from earth, the stars above being sole watchers of the scene. A few days afterwards his body was found, on a surf-smitten beach, not far distant from the place where he was last seen alive.

It was natural enough that, as I seated myself in the Federal-street church, my thoughts should revert to Dr. Carpenter, for he it was who had first revealed to me, in a lecture at the Bristol Philosophical Institution, the unsurpassed eloquence of William Ellery Channing, of whom he was an ardent and most judicious admirer. And there I sat within the very shadow of the pulpit in which America's most widely-known pulpit-orator was, a few years ago, wont to pour out full and clear streams from the fountain of his capacious mind. One of the few regrets that I have experienced since I made this country my home, has been that I did not reach its shores in sufficient time to have heard Channing. Only the written word remains, and that is much, but after all it does not quite compensate for the loss of the living voice, of the beaming eye, of the expressive features. Yet it was something even to sit in the church made famous by his ministrations, and with half-closed eyes to survey in imagination that grave, earnest face, and dignified figure in the pulpit which would now know it no more forever.

When a great pulpit orator dies, he generally bequeaths a great difficulty to his people in the shape of their choice of a successor, for it is by no means an easy thing to do away with old prejudices and ancient habits of hearing.

And a rather perilous position does he occupy who stands in the lately vacated pulpit ; for seldom does it happen that the mantle of the ascending great man falls on shoulders equally well able to sustain and bear it. Now and then, however, it so happens that the successor of a popular preacher, by a rare combination of qualities, if he does not completely fill the chasm made by death, yet bridges it so effectually and gracefully that no

“ Dreary sea now flows between.”

And this I believe has been the case in respect to the Rev. Dr. Gannett, and the society meeting at the Federal-street church. To them the loss of Channing was, to a certain extent, irreparable, but it is our consolation to know that frequently when suns set, distinct and bright through the purple western haze is often to be seen the coming brightness of some new orb, whose beams to a certain degree will compensate for the quenched light of the just vanished luminary.

Dr. Gannett's pulpit appearance can scarcely fail to impress the gazer with a sense of profound respect. His head is bald, save on the temples, which are covered with silvery hair. Dark, solemn eyes gleam from beneath rather busy brows, and the whole countenance has the sedate expression of a close student. His voice is not powerful, but the tones are clear, distinct and well modulated. Seemingly heedless of rhetorical flourishes, and indeed of affectations of any kind, he preaches as all thinking men ought and do preach,—from the depths of his soul. Popular, in the general sense of the word



popularity, which means one who draws a crowd of parson-worshippers, Dr. Gannett is not, nor is it likely that he will be. His preaching is too calm, too dignified to suit the popular taste. I should almost suppose him something of a hermit in life and thought; I say I suppose so, for I have no means of knowing save by his pulpit appearance and pulpit sayings. He has his manner, but is neither gaudy, nor meretricious, nor noisy, nor eccentric. And then he is seldom wordy; he never uses a word too much; you seldom feel that another word could have been supplied which would be better than the one used.

In common with the best spirits of the age, Dr. Gannett eschews the didactic method, alike as a method of obtaining the truth, or communicating truth; he seldom presents his thought wrapped in the formulas of logic. He presents to you his thought; he takes pleasure in his own volitions and thinkings: he does not set them forth as man-traps to catch unwary understandings. His style, at times, lacks continuity, because of its more weighty excellence. You could figure him, in the middle ages, contenting himself with a cell, and shrinking from confraternity with society, so that his spirit might be free of the universe. Hermits there are now-a-days, and they are the world's best teachers, too: for to know a world a man must to a great degree go out of it, and shut himself up where he may survey it without partiality or passion, or spleen. Thus in the olden time the lone thinker hied him away to woods, to claustral solitudes, to chambers excavated from beetling rocks. He sat upon the

ancestral moss of the hoary tree, he looked down a thousand fathoms into the depths of his own soul, while the silences descended around him and echoed through the solitudes their million voices. Ah ! why in these days have we forsaken the world's oldest and best preachers ? Out of the hermit life the fine gold is ever dug. The superficial attainments, the prattling, twaddling, mawkish, blue-stockingingism of the tea-table may indeed be picked up at a circulating library, or from the delightful and instructive discourses of the Reverend Orthodox Fiddle-faddle ; but if a man would be an instructor, — if he would be instructed, it holds, now as in the olden time, like the almost divine Pagan, he must travel to the grot to meet Egeria ; or (and this figure is far more in keeping with the subject) he must go into the wilderness for forty days ; if the angels are to minister to him, he must retire into the mountain apart to pray.

Many of Dr. Channing's sentences come to us like the short, weighty, condensed syllables of those brave old writers, Thomas Fuller, or Owen Feltham, or Sir Thomas Browne. Not rich with the mellowing pomp, the stained-glass glory of the last of these, but say-sentences, composed of the richness of the first and the depth of meaning of the last, for, preach whenever he will, his sermons reveal the thinker ; and we have sentences that abide in the memory like verbal or mental amulets, — sentences like the hill-tops, chaining the horizon around, and marking out the character of the country and its boundaries and beauties.

Dr. Gannett occupies a high position in his church.

He is the representative of the conservative portion of the Unitarian body, and is one who will not bate one jot or tittle of its great distinctive principles. Heedless of the "liberal" movement of certain portions of the connexion, he eschews all "new-fangled" notions, and is a "Hebrew of the Hebrews." His influence in the city of Boston, and wherever Unitarianism is preached, is very great, and he exercises it in all cases judiciously. Few pastors are more devoted to, or more beloved and prized by their people. As a writer he wields a vigorous and powerful pen, and possesses a transparent and nervous style of diction. In him the temperance movement, and of late the Maine Law, has a firm and unflinching advocate, and few benevolent societies are unbenefited by his aid. Perhaps there is no minister now living who could so successfully labor in the field once occupied by William Ellery Channing as does Dr. Ezra S. Gannett.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

REV. JOHN PIERPONT. HIS APPEARANCE. HIS STYLE OF  
PREACHING, ETC. REV. E. H. CHAPIN.

JOHN PIERPONT! The heart of many a true lover of the possessors of what Wordsworth calls

"The vision and the faculty divine,"

will pulsate with a quicker beat when that name is mentioned, for the gifted individual who bears it, is known not only in his own land, but in the "mother country," as a genuine Son of Song. Pulpit poets in these days, when almost everybody who can read strings of rhymes, are by no means rare; but in proportion to their numbers, the men whose songs the world will not willingly let die, are comparatively few. Pierpont belongs not to that class whose productions are merely of an ephemeral nature. In the Walhalla of Genius he is sure of a niche, beside those allotted to the greatest of his Country's Bards.

An anonymous writer speaking of him as an American poet, says:—

"His poetical temperament added greatly to his power as a pulpit orator. His imagination was always an active minister in the service of his reason. Profuse in beautiful and expressive comparisons, ranging at will through the glories and wonders of creation, and susceptible to all the phases of human emotion, it arrayed his most profound thoughts in a fascinating costume, concealing the severity of his argument in graceful and flowing imagery. Born with an innate genius for poetry, he would have attained a brilliant fame in that direction, had not his mind been preoccupied with absorbing studies and the wearing labors of his profession. As it is, his poetical productions, though limited in number, have a distinguished place in American literature. His principal poem, "The Airs of Palestine," is an admirable specimen of versification, classical in conception and in

diction, abounding in pleasing images and elevated religious thought. It met with a highly favorable reception from the best judges of poetry, upon its first appearance, and their decision has never been reversed by subsequent readers. Mr. Pierpont's numerous smaller pieces, suggested for the most part by occasions of public interest, are widely known, and are universally popular. Some of them are models of genuine lyrical poetry."

A few Sabbaths ago at the dawn of day we left the hot city behind us and journeyed as far as Medford, in which charming place the subject of our sketch at present officiates. And grateful indeed was the change from the "endless meal of brick" to the green country. Very pleasant are these New England villages, especially to an eye that has long been accustomed to survey those of old England; the latter bearing all the marks of age, the former possessing all the charms of novelty. How white and glittering these pretty cottages with their green blinds look! There is so much taste displayed in their construction that each of them with its pillars and verandah, and sometimes its arched porch, seems intended as a model for exhibition and only lacking a glass shade. Indeed the little lightning rods pointing above the chimnies and gables, seem to be the cut-off cords by which they might have been let down from cloud-land. And then, surrounded, as they are, by beautiful trees and gardens, and the cleanest of atmospheres around and above them, they appear to an English eye more like houses seen in dreams and pictures than real dwelling-

places, so very airy, unsubstantial and smokeless do they appear. And, instead of some ancient, ivy-clad temple with its surrounding grave-yard, where "The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep," there arises here an exquisitely neat church, white and pure, looking as the feathers of an angel's wing. And hark! from the turret, a bell rings out its "church-going" tones, whose echoes over vale and lake float sweetly in the summer calm.

Here we are then at the door of Mr. Pierpont's church, into which we forthwith enter and take our seat. It is spacious and well filled. Already the pastor is in the pulpit, and the choir are singing the first hymn.

Let me sketch him as he rises to read an opening chapter.

You may see at a glance that no common man is before you. He is tall, very erect, and firmly, though not stoutly built. In point of figure and dress he so much resembles the late Robert Southey that were his head concealed he might be mistaken for the late Laureate. But that head is a remarkable one. I have seldom seen one more striking. Its great characteristic appears to me to be its perfect manliness. The forehead is high, broad and furrowed across with the lines of thought. Overshadowing it is an abundance of white hair, which in moments of excitement and exertion "streams like a meteor." Beneath heavy brows are a pair of blue, keen, expressive eyes, that change with every changing thought. The nose is short and thick, the mouth and chin symmetrical and well shaped. The expression of

the whole is that of great benignity blended with indomitable courage, unshakable decision, and much dignity.

Mr. Pierpont's style of preaching is exclusively his own. In it is mingled boldness, fervor, deep thought and irresistible argument. It has been said of his sermons when pastor of the Hollis street church, in Boston, that they were "replete with original thought, clothed in a highly picturesque and poetic diction. They were often argumentative in character, but always relieved by ingenious and novel illustrations. Avoiding in a great measure abstract and dogmatic themes, they dwelt on topics which come home to the "business and bosoms" of a popular audience. Free from the threadbare common-places of the pulpit, they attracted attention by the boldness of discussion and originality of style. Always earnest, decorous, impressive, they sometimes borrowed the resources of pungent sarcasm and racy humor. Dealing in the broad principles of human nature, deriving suggestions from the current events of the day, and delivered with a fervent and kindling eloquence, they aroused the hearer to reflection and inquiry, while they touched the nobler sympathies of his heart. No public speaker has more thoroughly studied the philosophy of elocution. The charm of his intonations, and the variety and force of his emphasis, gave a fresh meaning to his reading of the Scriptures and of sacred poetry. In extemporaneous efforts, there has seldom been his equal, for continuity of thought, freedom of language, and pithy and pointed illustration."

The same writer adds : —

“John Pierpont, whose name we have never seen graced with the “semilunar fardels,” which indicate that a preacher of the Gospel has so far drilled in harmony with the “Masters in Israel” of his age as to be dubbed a Doctor of Divinity, has devoted a long and active life to the service of society, in the ministry of Christian truth, righteousness, purity, and love. Unrecognized, to a great degree, by the Scribes and Pharisees, with whom he has acted in intimate relations, “among them, but not of them,” he is one of the most richly-gifted men of the present day, and has achieved a fame, which will descend to future generations with increasing brightness, and with a benignant and elevating influence. In the singularly varied walks of life, in which his lot has been cast, he has been subject to severe trials, calling for the exercise of nobleness of character, serenity of judgment, and promptness of action; and in all of them he has exhibited those traits of generous and heroic manhood, that lofty devotion to principle, and that stern disregard to personal consequences, which have won the admiration of his friends, and extorted a tribute of homage even from his enemies. Though now advanced in years, his “eye is not dim, nor is his natural force abated,” while he devotes the energies of a green and vigorous old age to the cause of moral truth and justice, at whose shrine he has been a faithful worshipper from his youth.”

The author of Crayon Sketches thus graphically describes Mr. Pierpont : —



“Pierpont is emphatically the Temperance poet. See him standing in that magnificent music hall, reading his poem before the members of the Mercantile Library Society. He is straight as a palm-tree fanned by the ‘airs of Palestine,’ his snow-white hair looks like a halo of glory about his head, and the rosy glow of health upon his face shows that his heart can never grow old. Few men of his years (he is upwards of sixty) have been young so long as he; few men of his age are so young as he is now. He always dresses neatly, and has an air of military compactness, looks well in the street or on the platform. His eyes are blue and brilliant; forehead stamped with the lines of intellectual superiority; sanguine, nervous. In any audience he would be singled out as a leader. As a speaker, he is always interesting, often eloquent. There is a rich vein of poetry running through his sermons and speeches, which enhance the value of his efforts. While speaking, he stands erect, and has a habit of shaking his hand, with his forefinger extended, when he is earnestly emphatic on any particular subject under discussion, at the same time moving his head, while his eyes flash as though he was shaking stars out of his forehead.”

Mr. Pierpont has long been identified with the cause of Temperance, and his labors in that field, as well as in other spheres of Moral Reforms have been great and singularly useful. It has been recorded of him that “He threw himself into these movements with peculiar energy and indomitable courage. He never shrunk from

their unpopularity. He had no desire to "make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." He uttered his convictions in the trumpet-tones of religious earnestness. Every word told. At length the persons who throve by existing abuses took the alarm. They began to quail before the burning eye of the fiery-hearted reformer. Low mutterings of dissatisfaction were heard. The faces of many old friends were turned against him, and their ancient love waxed cold. Discontented murmurs were heard "between the porch and the altar," as the undismayed "man of God" lifted up his voice in rebuke of some gigantic iniquity. It was thought an unpardonable audacity that a Christian preacher in a Christian church should speak so boldly of "temperance, righteousness, and a judgment to come." But as yet, the lurking fire of opposition had not broke out into open flame. At this crisis, Mr. Pierpont was attacked with a violent fever. His sufferings were severe and protracted. At last the disease was conquered, but it left him almost a wreck of his former self. In 1835, by the advice of his physicians, he made a voyage to Europe, extended his travels to Constantinople and the ruins of Ephesus, and returned in about eleven months, with renewed energy, to the discharge of his official functions.

Soon after his return, the discontent of those who had been aggrieved by his zeal for reform, was manifested in open and violent opposition. A painful controversy between a portion of the parish and the pastor commenced in 1838, which continued for seven years, when a dis-

missal was requested by Mr. Pierpont, who had triumphantly sustained himself against the charge of his adversaries.

His conduct in this protracted controversy was marked by great energy, determination, and wisdom. He felt that he was not merely contending for personal rights, but for a great moral principle. The freedom of the pulpit was at stake. A blow was struck through him at the right of liberty of thought and of speech in the public teacher of religion. He promptly faced the danger, and faced it manfully. Surrounded by timid friends, who shrunk from contest, as an evil in itself — with little sympathy from his professional brethren, who regarded the peace of a parish as the one thing needful, and living in an atmosphere of strong conservative proprieties, he was thrown to a great degree, on his own resources, and made "to tread the wine-press alone." But not for a moment did he falter in his course. With equal promptness and intrepidity, he met every manœuvre of his enemies, until, having fully vindicated his position, he withdrew from a struggle in which a further triumph would have been superfluous.

The spirit in which he dealt with his antagonists will be perceived from the following extract from a reply to the proprietors of the church who had communicated to him a vote that they no longer wished for his services as pastor: "And now, my brethren, as this may possibly be the last counsel that, as your minister, I may ever have an opportunity to give you, those of you especially, who have been most active in disquieting the sheep of

this Christian fold, by your persecution of its shepherd; indulge me, I pray you, in one word more of counsel. The time is coming when you will thank me for it, thank me the more heartily, the more promptly you follow it. Desist, I counsel you to desist, from that part of your business which has been the cause of all this unhappy controversy; the cause of your troubles, and of my trials and triumph, for I shall be triumphant at last. Desist from the business that, through the poverty of many, has made you rich, that has put you into your palaces by driving them through hovels and prisons down into the gates of the grave. Abandon the business that is kindling the fires of hatred upon your own hearth-stones, and pouring poison into the veins of your children, yea, and of your children's children, and sending the shriek of delirium through their chambers, the business that is now scourging our good land as pestilence and war have never scourged it; nay, the business, in prosecuting which you are, even now, carrying a curse to all the continents of the world, and making our country a stench in the nostrils of the nations. I counsel you to stay your hands from this work of destruction, and wash them of this great iniquity, as becomes the disciples of Him who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them. As His disciples, I counsel you no longer to absent yourselves from your wonted place of worship, and to return to your allegiance to your church and to God. Say to your minister, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! you have faithfully done the work that you were ordained to do. You have neither spared us nor feared

us. You have even wounded us ; but faithful are the wounds of a friend. We commend you for your work, and charge you to go on with it, that we may meet together, and rejoice together in the presence of God.' ”

Mr. Pierpont is also a very popular lecturer ; and he frequently recites his poems in public. This I cannot but think is *not* a step in the right direction, for surely it is somewhat degrading literature to peddle it from town to town, just as other New England “ notions ” are carried from one hamlet to another.

Whilst speaking of one Reverend Advocate and Poet of Temperance, I am reminded of another minister who as a Platform speaker has not, I conceive, his equal in America, on this particular topic. I refer to the Rev. E. H. Chapin, of New York. Come with me, reader, in imagination, to some great public meeting when this distinguished orator is to address the assembly, for, for once I shall depart from my usual plan, and sketch my subject on the Platform instead of in the Pulpit.

And, in fact, the Platform, as well as the Press, is a great rival of the Pulpit. This is preëminently an age of public meetings, and the man who can successfully work upon and wield the passions and impulses of large audiences, in some measure approaches to the character of the ancient Bard or Minstrel. He moves from town to town, gathering round him the thousands of intelligent and sympathetic people, as of old the minstrel gathered the crowds of baronial retainers in the Hall. There are two kinds of meetings held in this country ; there are first, immense gatherings like those in Faneuil Hall or

on the Common, where the people go to enthrone or inaugurate a principle; they listen to the annunciations from the platform only as the announcements of their own loyalty to certain thoughts. When they applaud, to a great degree, it may be said that they applaud themselves; cheer after cheer arises, because they behold arising behind the speaker, their own impersonated wisdom. In meetings like these there is little freedom of opinion, little real freedom of speech. The man who attempts to breast that wave of feeling is borne away upon it to a perfect ocean of scorn; and on the whole, such meetings are studies, not of the best phase of mankind; sparks of speech touch the gunpowder of prejudice, and instantly all is in a volcanic blaze. There are other immense gatherings where the people assemble to hear a man, a favorite, an orator speak, and then they are prepared to listen to anything he may say; they go determined to be good-humored, determined to be inspired, determined to be pleased.

So it is at this time, reader, and see, the Rev. Mr. Chapin is about to address us. Look at him, — he is not tall, but he is fleshy. His face is good, somewhat like that of Napoleon in many of its phases. The eyes are dark, lively, and possessing that liquid depth so peculiar to all men of brilliant imaginations. Swarthy is the complexion and dark the hair. As he commences, you hear a rich, deep, melodious voice, beautiful in its modulations. He goes on, and now you will agree with me that the platform is a most influential organ of public opinion. How the orator's eloquence intoxicates the

young! what vehemency it lends to the impulses! How, like the winds over the ocean, the voice of the speaker awakens the passions and the emotions in the soul! There are few sights more thrilling, surely, than such as this, a spectacle of a vast assemblage of men and women, all of them intelligent and educated, all aroused and quickened beneath the thrilling tones of this soul in earnest! How the masses in the aisles heave to and fro! How breathless! how hushed! how low the first muttered indications of applause, a voice in the distant crowd, irrepressible, sinking, however, directly, now louder, louder, louder! Ah! the sentence is unfinished, ere forth it rolls! that peal of energetic praise, the speaker masters the tumult, and moves on with his argument or his declamation, — you watch, while he advances, the kindling faces of the crowd. Bright eyes flash; cheeks are flushed; all is paroxysmatic excitement; all the vitality of the meeting is called forth; and now the building shakes again and again with the loud, outspeaking thunder of the people. But the climax is not yet reached; the speaker has not concluded, and he will not drop from that altitude; he only stooped gracefully, to slake his plumage in a mountain lake. He will bear them higher yet; his voice has attained a more perfect fulness; he has shaken away the encumberments of the understanding. He commits himself to the full heavens of Hope and Promise. See how he pours his magnetism over the meeting! and every auditor is clairvoyant, in the body or out of the body they cannot tell, for the witchery of genius is over them and upon them. Every

word now becomes a shaft of light, every sentence a loud clap, a peal from the tempest of eloquence, announcing the necessary conclusion, until, as the speaker closes, the Hall is rent with the loud torrents of compressed admiration. Some of the most nervously sensitive of the audience will not to-night sleep very soundly, or get to sleep very early; it is an opium-dream, an enchantment, a kind of fairy land through which he led them; and those loud trumpet gales which rung *Io Pæans* around him, were the modes of the expression of their deep popular sympathy.

Mr. Chapin is certainly one of the most distinguished Pulpit and Platform orators of the day. He is at present Pastor of a Universalist Society in New York. Formerly he preached in the Boston School street Church.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BROMFIELD STREET CHURCH. A REMINISCENCE OF  
DR. BEAUMONT. THE REV. JOSEPH CUMMINGS. HIS  
STYLE OF ORATORY. GENERAL REMARKS.

WERE any one to ask me the question, to what order of architecture does the Methodist Church in Bromfield street belong, I should be puzzled exceedingly; for



regarded externally, a more incongruous, unimposing, characterless building does not "cumber the ground." It is an ollapodrida of brick, mortar, stucco and wood, an ecclesiastical monstrosity, — and it would be an eye-sore to Mr. Ruskin, of the Seven Lamps of Architecture, as, indeed, it is to all who regard the "proprieties" of church-building. But, fortunately, it is so situated that hundreds pass by its door, ignorant of the neighborhood of a Church, and so, happily, lose the view of this singular and grotesque front.

Having elsewhere said something on the subject of church architecture, it will not be necessary again to refer to it; so let us enter the Bromfield Methodist Church, and quitting criticisms on dead walls, listen to the living voice as it speaks of the stone which the builders did refuse, and which is become the "Head of the corner."

But this much I may say, — the interior of the church is far superior to the outside in point of arrangement and effect. It is lofty; and the ceiling is supported by slender pillars; across the roof run light beams of oak. There are spacious galleries; comfortable pews below; a good organ; a capital player thereon; an efficient choir, and a handsome pulpit, behind which is the best specimen of fresco painting, of its kind, in Boston. (By the way, about the *worst*, is in Dr. Caldicott's Church at Charlestown.) So much for the inside of the Bromfield-street Church.

As I sat, previous to the commencement of the sermon, looking over some of the glowing and glorious



hymns of Charles Wesley, my thoughts travelled back to the time when I last sat in a Methodist chapel. It was not in New, but in Old England. On that occasion the preacher was Dr. Beaumont, one of the most remarkable of living British Wesleyan ministers ; and therefore I deem him worthy of an incidental notice.

Imagine yourself, dear reader, in a crowded London Methodist Chapel, in the pulpit of which stands the minister whom I have just named. He is by no means brilliant in appearance, rather the reverse. Some persons might term him slovenly-looking, and complain that he does not dress well ; — that, he does not ; but he addresses well, and that is better.

I have little liking for pulpit fops, or pretty preaching, and far prefer roughness and raciness to smoothness and twaddle. The Doctor commences his sermon. At first we cannot conceive at what he is driving ; he appears to be struggling with some great, as yet unripe thought, — as Hercules struggled with the serpents. Soon, however, he conquers all difficulties, and flings out with marvellous facility idea upon idea ; aye, he *flings* them out ! There is not even the grace of the sling-motion in his action ; but there are stern, strong, hard truths that hit the giant of error full in the forehead. Soon he warms up ; his voice, rough and harsh from some affection of the palate, become familiar, and you excuse the ruggedness of tone for the sake of the gems of thought. On he goes, — and soon he begins to perspire ; beads, — dews of thought, — appear on his forehead, and slowly, slowly they stream down and trickle over his shaggy eyebrows,

until the orator, in a fit of pulpit enthusiasm, utters a harsher sentence than ever; throws himself half out of the pulpit; looks as though he had come from some Russian bath reeking with moisture; and, in the voice of an asthmatic stentor, roars — “Repent!”

Dr. Beaumont is most exuberant of action in the pulpit, and perspires prodigiously. He has a way of shaking his head violently, as he leans over the cushion, and on such occasions he not unfrequently sprinkles the hearers immediately below him. A little boy once remarked as he removed the moisture from his shining locks: “Never mind, they are but the droppings of the sanctuary!” — for which witticism he got, very undeservedly I think, a severe lecture from his matter of fact sire.

But I must call back these wandering thoughts, and describe the Methodist minister of this Bromfield-street Church, who is by this time in the pulpit. In point of personal appearance he is tall, of good figure, and has one of those grave, contemplative, spectacled faces that indicate habitual thought. He delivers the hymn with much feeling, and after it has been finely sung by the choir, reads a portion of Scripture with solemn emphasis. A prayer, truly devotional, follows, and then comes another hymn, after which the sermon.

Mr. Cummings’s discourses are all but extemporaneous, though there are evident indications of careful previous labor and finish. They are delivered in a solemn, but somewhat monotonous tone, and this, to a critical ear, is certainly a drawback. But the style, the matter, is excellent. In regard to illustration, Mr. Cummings is

peculiarly happy. Figures often abound in his sermons ; indeed, he is about one of the best analogical preachers I have heard in America. And the figures he uses are not mere tropes of speech ; they are at once graphic delineations and perfect symbols. You feel that you understand the subject better by them ; that they, indeed, form a part of the subject ; that they are the body, containing the soul of the discourse. There are some preachers who will lighten at you, and thunder at you, and meander-rill you, and purple-violet you. They will send forth a host of figures to buzz about you like flies, to annoy you and creep about you like yet more loathsome insects ; but you feel all the time that it is labor thrown away ; that you, for one, are certainly no nearer the mark ; nay, that the dizzy noise has perhaps carried you further away from the meaning. Nothing is easier, and nothing is more worthless, than this kind of preaching,—wholly impressionless and pointless as it ever is and must be.

Mr. Cummings is, I believe, very popular among the people of his connection. I do not wonder at it. Every speaker, who in addition to soundness of doctrine, practical application, and ardent piety, can command stores of figure, always will be so. This is the secret of the fabulist's power ; hence the mighty influence of the parable ; hence, sometimes, the force of an allusion to some well-known object in nature, or to some household circumstances. To such a mind, to one disposed to lay itself out for such illustrations, the whole world is a mighty gallery crowded with objects. Every history, every sci-

ence furnishes them ; every room presents them ; no day can pass without them. The greatest of all lips have seized truth, and this method is so simple that it is not denied to the humblest to be somewhat expert at it. The truth itself was perhaps distant, and ideal, and only remotely perceived ; but the figure was truly at once a mirror, and an interpreter. We started with pleasure and surprise to find a difficulty melting away.

Mr. Cummings, unlike Dr. Beaumont, uses very little action in the pulpit. A gentle waving of the hand and arm is about all that may be observed. He is very fluent, scarcely ever hesitates, and invariably succeeds in keeping up the close attention of his auditors. No one who hears him can for one moment doubt, that his great aim is to do good, and that all other aims are subsidiary to that prime principle in a minister. As a pastor he is greatly beloved by his people, and few men exercise a wider ministerial and personal influence among Wesleyan Methodists than the minister of Bromfield-street Church.

## CHAPTER XIX.

FLASHY PREACHING. DR. RICHARD S. STORRS. APPEAR-  
ANCE. STYLE OF PREACHING, ETC.

“AND don’t forget the good, old, sound preachers, sir,” said a friend the other day, to me, whilst conversing with him on the subject of this series of sketches. “And,” he added, “it is but justice to these pillars of our church, that though they do not now, it may be, flash as brilliantly as some of the ‘new lights,’ they should not be overlooked in a volume which professes to sketch Distinguished American Divines.” And my friend was in the right. Therefore, shall I, in this chapter, speak of one whose name is a tower of strength, and whose career has been one of honor and of usefulness.

In my sketch of Dr. Baron Stow, I said that he was one of a class, who are rather teachers than orators, of men whose aim is ever to give their hearers something to *think of*, not to *talk about*; and now I have to sketch another minister, who might come within the same category. Here I would transfer to my pages some remarks on “flashy” preaching, which I recently met with in a Boston newspaper, and which are *ad rem* to the matter. The writer says, alluding to a popular misconception:—

“There is a mode of preaching the Gospel at the present day, exceedingly popular, but which we regard

as defective in its appropriate influences. It consists in addressing the imagination with lively imagery or highly wrought pictures, and endeavoring to awaken the emotions and affections through this, rather than through the reason by the majesty or tenderness of truth. We object to this mode of sermonizing, because it awakens essentially the same class of emotions that are awakened by the drama and romance ; and, therefore, though the truth may be clearly exhibited, it fails to produce its legitimate gospel effect. In other words, while it awakens great interest, moves the sympathies, starts the tear, even agitates the hearer, it does not deeply or permanently affect the conscience and devotional affections. It rather pleases than benefits. It excites, but yields little Christian nutriment. As a tragedy seldom improves the morals, so this picturesque, enchanting preaching seldom strengthens the Christian graces. The result lodges in the imagination and taste, awakening admiration, rather than the conscience and heart of the hearer, — on the general principle that the capacity or tendency of the mind most active in the production of a sermon is usually the most affected in hearing it.

“ Reinhard, formerly Court preacher at Dresden, in his ‘ Letters and Confessions,’ translated from the German by the late Rev. Oliver A. Taylor, has so happily expressed this thought together with others associated with it, alike deserving the consideration of the ambassador of Christ, and those who listen to his instructions, that I beg leave to give a short extract : —

“ ‘ He who banishes instruction from the pulpit, and

attempts to reduce everything to the excitement of emotion, robs the ministerial office of a great part of its usefulness, and deprives the great mass of the people of almost every opportunity for the enlargement and correction of their religious knowledge. Moreover, I must absolutely deny the possibility of a man's exciting a religious feeling and rendering it salutary and productive of exalted effects, otherwise than by commencing with convincing instruction, and *taking the way through the intellect to the heart.* *All his efforts to raise emotion by operating upon the imagination, will result in inflaming it and enkindling a wildfire, which can prove of no advantage to genuine piety, and may positively injure it.* A religious emotion, to be salutary and improving, and in a rational and profitable manner effect the exaltation of the mind, must be founded upon a lively perception of important truths vividly represented. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive of a discourse, which shall in reality take hold of, awaken and inspire the man, and prepare the way for, and raise the emotions of the heart, without instruction. Now as this instruction will produce the most effect, if delivered with clearness and proper arrangement, it is impossible to see why strict method should not be combined with the object of affecting the heart.

While you are meditating upon a subject, then, some one will say, let everything be arranged in its proper place ; but when you come to write it out, and dress up this skeleton with skin and flesh, carefully conceal the various parts from the audience addressed, and then,



their eyes will not discover a skeleton without spirit and life.

Let me tarry a while at the image which lies at the foundation of this remark. Nature does, indeed, cover up the bony fabric of a beautiful body, with tender parts of various kinds, and thereby impart to it those powerful charms by which it allures the beholder; but does she, in so doing, reduce it to a mass of flesh, and make it impossible for us any longer to distinguish its single parts and members, discover their relation to each other, or point out their joints? On the other hand, is not this bony fabric, which constitutes the firm basis of the whole, so completely visible, that one can readily see where each member begins and ends, and how they are all connected together; and is not this appropriate and natural compactness and these regular proportions, which render a beautiful form so pleasing? Now, to continue the image employed, a discourse, the whole organization, and the skeleton of whose thoughts are concealed by the manner in which it is written out, and the language in which it is clothed, will not constitute a beautiful body, full of life and motion; but can be looked upon as nothing more than an unformed and helpless mass of flesh, which cannot be made into anything, or be reckoned among any known class of forms. This, indeed, is the impression which such discourses ordinarily leave behind them. One who listens to them, hears much that is beautiful, but he cannot tell definitely in what it consists, and is unable to reduce it to any clear and distinct

shape. I cannot persuade myself that such discourses ever accomplish any good."

Very few ministers are better known to the religious world than the Rev. Richard H. Storrs, of Braintree, Massachusetts ; as he is to preach, this Sabbath morning, in our good city of Boston, let us embrace the opportunity of hearing him at the Pine street church, the pastor of which, by the way, will hereafter form the subject of a separate article.

As we enter the House of God, the preluding tones of the organ are softly floating through the building and already is the minister in the pulpit. Presently, the music having ceased, he rises and invokes the aid of the great Head of the Church. His appearance at once impresses you. It is emphatically that of "an old disciple." Over a sallow, time-furrowed face and forehead, wave hairs which have grown gray in the Master's service, and eyes somewhat dimmed by age, though still retaining much of their old fire's glance, from their deep orbits through aiding spectacles. The nose is aquiline, the lips a trifle retracted and the chin long. Add to these features a spare, wiry figure, slightly bowed by time and toil, you have formed some idea of the outer-man of the Reverend Richard H. Storrs.

The sermon is on a subject which, as it should be, has been preached on time over and again, and therefore may reasonably be supposed to possess no points of novelty such as would create a "sensation" or form "striking features." But the most familiar subject may

be so handled by a powerful and original mind as to surround it with a charm that is worth far more than all the garnishings of oratory. And such was the case in this instance, for seldom have I heard a sermon whose arrangements in all respects were so perfect. So natural were its divisions, that the various sections appeared to self-arrange themselves. And then there were no insane attempts at rhetorical display, none of those pretty ingenuities in which some preachers indulge, deluding themselves, as they do so, into the belief that they are original, when they are only absurd. How astonishing it is that many young preachers *will* be wise above what is written. Such remind me of a fellow in Devonshire, who in olden times went to a magistrate for the purpose of getting a license to preach. "Can you read?" asked the magistrate, merely as a matter of form, for he never supposed that any one would attempt to speak who was not master of at least the alphabet; but a reply in the negative startled him from his propriety. "Not read!" he exclaimed — "why, how then, can you preach a sermon from a text?" "Oh!" replied the would-be Divine — "Mother reads, and I 'splains and 'spounds." And so it is in the case of some pulpit-aspirants I wot of, who " 'splain and 'spound" with a vengeance.

The worst of it is that these young gentlemen are apt to bore one into giving opinions of their productions. Perhaps the best rebuke ever given to one of this genus was given by Robert Hall to a young minister who pressed him very much to say what he thought of the sermon to which the great man had that morning listened.

For a time, Hall tried to shirk the question, but on being hard pressed he exclaimed : —

“ Well, Mr. —, there was one fine passage, sir, in your sermon, one very fine passage, sir.”

“ Ah,” cried the youth, rubbing his hands, “ and pray, Mr. Hall, what might that have been ? ”

“ Why, sir, your passage *from* the pulpit, sir,” returned the irritated great man.

To return to Dr. Storrs. Unlike the sermons of many eminent Theologians, his was anything but dry. Book-men are apt to be dull preachers, but though in cases of controversy on Bible matters no man stands higher, as an authority, than Dr. Storrs. The sin, or failing, rather, of heaviness, cannot be laid to his charge. In the sermon in question, he frequently glowed and sparkled, and at the conclusion of his sermon, when he described the final glory of the redeemed and their position “ high and glorious, on thrones above those of the angels,” he was eloquent in the full sense of that much abused word. And yet, though every sentence betrayed profundity of thought and a complete knowledge of the subject, it was pervaded throughout by the exquisite charm of simplicity. Learning never obtruded itself, though we all felt it had been employed. The child might have understood it, the old man have profited by it.

Dr. Storrs has long occupied, and happily still occupies a very influential position in the body of which he is a prominent member. In associations, conventions, and assemblies of all kinds, his opinion is regarded as of great weight. For over fifty years he has been pastor

over the Braintree church, and many has been the reverend head which he has seen laid low during his own protracted career. He has in the ministry at Brooklyn, New York, a son, who is one of the most rising and eloquent men of the day, so that when his own work is over, in all probability, the honored name of Storrs will not be absent from the list of pulpit orators. But may the period be long distant when the subject of our sketch shall be called from his toil to his triumph,

“And wave his palm and wear his crown,  
And with the Elders cast them down.”

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## CHAPTER XX.

HENRY WARD BEECHER. PLYMOUTH CHURCH. APPEAR-  
ANCE AND STYLE OF THE PREACHER. SKETCH OF  
REV. HUGH M'NEILE, OF LIVERPOOL.

ALREADY have I, in this volume, sketched two members of that family composed of ministers, authors and authoresses, which rejoices in the name of Beecher. And when, a short time since I informed a friend that I intended to limn the lineaments of a third, he shook his head, and observed that he feared my book might be too

Beechery. Well, I will take the chance of that, reader, but I have little fear, myself, on such a score. There are many, to whom I think a sketch of that almost universal favorite, Henry Ward Beecher, will be acceptable.

Doubtless if the family to which the subject of our sketch belongs had lived in the old times of foray, feud, and raid, it would, from its energy and decision, its fierce battlings with vested wrongs, and its many triumphs in well foughten fields have earned the name of the Bold Beechers. The head of it is, as we have seen elsewhere, a veteran crusader in a cause which has for its aim the destruction of drunkenness, and the elevation to sobriety of those who have sunk beneath the attacks of the Giant Despair of Intemperance. And well and worthily have the children seconded the efforts of their sire ! At this moment it would be difficult to name another family which comprises among its members, male and female, so much talent, and talent employed, too, in the cause of humanity. For my own part I have no idea of waiting until people are dead before I render my tribute of applause and admiration ; and while I would not bespatter any man or woman with fulsome adulation, so neither would I from a false delicacy withhold from them what credit is justly their due. Therefore, I now proceed to speak in terms of eulogy of one, than whom no clergyman in America is more popular, or who promises to accomplish a greater amount of good.

It was a night of darkness and of storm when I went first to hear Henry Ward Beecher ; but " the fame of his name " had reached me far over the water in another

land, and a blinding snow could not detain me at home when such a man was to preach. On reaching Plymouth church, in Orange-street, Brooklyn, N. Y., I found crowds pressing into the church, although it yet wanted more than half an hour of the time of commencing the service. The inside of the house was crammed.

Now a man who can gather round his pulpit, Sunday after Sunday, such an audience as I saw, must be a no ordinary character. The Plymouth church is a very spacious and handsome structure, and I was informed that when Mr. Beecher preaches it is always filled. At this I do not wonder, for few men possess such powers of attraction, especially as regards the young. This great church is a frightful place for a man to deliver himself in,—a frightful place, unless he can so charge his words, that instead of gazing round upon vast vacancy, instead of giving forth his words to

“Bellow the vast and boundless deep,”

they shall be so attractive as to crowd the spacious place. How many men, think you, could be found to fill this church? How many preachers could attract so immense a multitude? but I have threaded my way to the place, when not only the pews, but the aisles and every other available space was occupied. The man who did this, and one of the very few that have the power to do this, I believe in all America, is Henry Ward Beecher.

The preacher rises from his seat and stands before us. At once you perceive that he has the Beecher face, the large liquid eyes, the full, lower part of the face, and

the expansive brow. He appears more youthful than I had supposed, judging from his wide-spread celebrity. Nay, he looks, in some respects, almost boyish. There is great power in that fine open face, much speculation in those eyes, a world of sarcasm and humor in that mouth. You can see at once that his face is the index of a fearless, generous, liberal soul, and such I have reason to believe Mr. Beecher possesses. On the whole, as you look at his face and person you cannot but come to the conclusion that a man of mark is before you.

His voice is rich and powerful, and he reads well. But let us listen as he discourses, and gläd are we that he extemporizes. Did he read his sermons, we venture to assert that he would not be half so effective as he is. We have heard that in private life our preacher is gentle and playful ; and you will find some difficulty in conceiving, that the man so companionable in the parlor, romping with children, bearing any amount of contradiction, is the same you behold so apparently bold and vehement. Unconquerable will, and unconquerable gentleness ; these are prominent attributes of his mind.

I have fancied that Mr. H. W. Beecher has two methods of addressing his hearers : his morning discourses are,

“ Orient pearls at random strung,”

In the evening, he is frequently diffuse alike in ideas and utterance, dilates, we should say, too much ; but in the morning, as we have heard him, he more usually addresses the experimental life of the Christian ; he



speaks more pertinently, his remarks are more "like goads." They are more rememberable; they are more suggestive; they appeal more to general information and knowledge. Perhaps something of this is usually the case with extemporaneous preachers. Morning services have more of gentleness: the audience is smaller, more Christian, and more loving. It is almost a test of a minister's Christian life — does he find himself more at home preaching morning or evening? The holier heart will love the morning usually the best, for it will address the nobler auditory: in the evening there is more of human passion, more of effort, more of display. John would preach best in the morning, talking to little children; Peter would preach best at night, — impulsive, fervid, vehement. We love our preacher's morning hortations best; but the evening is the time of crowds and thronging multitudes; and then we can very well believe that he, unconsciously to himself, throws aside the axiom and the hint, and commits himself to a stream of declamatory fervor. He does not speak without instructing; and even in the very height of his heat and tempest of speech, every word does appear to be bathed in common sense. Common sense is the great characteristic of his style: he appeals to the understanding. Your teacher is perfectly honest with you; he does not perplex you with technicalities; every word is downright and plain. No wonder that the poor and illiterate as well as the rich and learned flock to hear him. Oh, what a relief it must be to listen to a man, a capable man, who points every word so that it tells; who sees,

and believes himself all that he says, and who enters the understandings of all his people by a path of light.

Our preacher is sometimes warm, vehement, bold, and impassioned; sometimes quiet, sententious, and slow; sometimes figurative, sometimes abounding with genuine humor, occasionally he flings out such home truths as the following, which occur in his remarks at the Anniversary of the New York Five Points Mission:

“When Christ went where there were sick, he healed them; where there was actual want, he created bread, and came down to their physical condition. Take the gospel to the miserable outcasts of our city, and no man can preach it unless he does more. It is as though he made a mark in the sand, and the first tide washes it away. Preach the gospel, and the hunger of the man makes him forget it. There is a great deal more gospel in a loaf of bread, sometimes, than in an old dry sermon. If I go to a man and bring to him in his want ever so much philosophy, he will not hear it; if I come down and bring him bread and clothes and medicine, this will give him a correct idea of the gospel, one which he can appreciate and understand.”

We may, in short, generalize Henry Ward Beecher beneath one characterization; he strikes us as a genuine man, hating all shows and shams, and is not only a lover of the truth, but one willing to make any sacrifice to uphold it and justice.

A writer in the *Illustrated Magazine*, speaking of the Rev. H. W. Beecher says:—

“His mode of preparation for his pulpit labor differs

very materially from that of the majority of preachers. We have already stated, that when at college he studied *both books and men*; in his preparations for the pulpit he seems to study *men* rather than books. During the week he visits among all classes of persons, noticing their peculiarities of character, and ascertaining their mental and moral condition and necessities. On Sunday morning — so it is said — he draws out upon paper the outline of his sermon, and goes from his study to the pulpit, when the ink is scarcely dry upon his paper, and while his thoughts are fresh in his mind. An hour's nap and a slight repast in the afternoon being taken, he prepares in like manner for his evening sermon, and goes again before a congregation of upwards of 2,000 persons, the majority of whom lean forward in breathless silence to delineations of character, pathetic appeals, and exposures of popular evils, such as few besides himself can give.

“Mr. Beecher paid a very short visit to the metropolis of England in 1852, and spent a few days also in Paris. During his stay in London, he won ‘golden opinions’ from the few with whom he had intercourse. One of these few, an admirable judge of men and of preaching, says of him: ‘Mr. Henry Ward Beecher is by far the most amusing and fascinating American it has ever been our lot to meet. He is a mass of flaming fire — restless, fearless, brilliant — a mixture of the poet, the orator, and the philosopher, such as we have seldom, if ever, found in any other man to the same extent. He is vivacious beyond even the temperature of Paris, and mirth-

ful even to wildness, seeming not to know that there is such a thing as care or sorrow in the world.'"

Very recently, members of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher's church have presented him with a sum of money, that he may build himself a country house. This is as it should be.

Let me here give an episodical notice of an eminent British Preacher, of whom, in regard of energy and popularity Henry Ward Beecher somewhat reminds us. I allude to the celebrated Hugh McNeile of Liverpool, whose name must be familiar to many readers in America, and who is, perhaps, at this moment, the most popular preacher of the establishment in England.

That strange country which boasts of a Grattan, a Curran, an Emmett, a Moore, and of many of the brightest stars in the hemisphere of genius, claims Hugh McNeile as one of her most gifted sons: and he does no discredit to the land of his birth; for he possesses all that impetuosity of temperament, that versatility of talent, that exuberance of imagination, and that affluence of imagery, which have characterized some of the most celebrated of the children of the Green Isle. Ballycastle, a place near Belfast, was his birthplace. Dublin, was the spot where his days of pupilage were passed. London was, for a time, the field in which he battled for name and fame; and, he is now the "observed of all observers" in the town of Liverpool.

For a time, he was one of the most popular preachers of the London pulpit. That was nearly twenty years ago. Hither he had come from the Irish Metropolis,

with the *prestige* of an Hibernian success almost unparalleled, and with all the collateral influence which a relationship to the celebrated Archbishop Magee could give him; he having married that Prelate's daughter.

Dr. McNeile now rode on the tide of success. His youth, his person, his uncommon talents, his untamed energy, drew, Sunday after Sunday, admiring crowds. From the peer to the *parvenu*, all were loud in their praises of the young Irish preacher. Ladies were enraptured with his florid descriptions, his poetical metaphors, and his rhetorical flowers. Stiff churchmen were delighted by his bold and fearless advocacy of their doctrines; and that vast and non-descript class of persons, who go wherever a popular preacher officiates, whatever his creed may be, followed in the train, and lauded him to the skies. Brilliant was his career; still, more brilliant was the vista of the future which stretched out before him. But alas! the public is a fickle animal, and popular applause is as variable

“As the shade

By the light quivering aspen made:”

something new was the great want of the day then, as it is now, and novelty will always carry every thing before it. No matter how absurd a creed is—let it be but strange and startling, and it is certain to attract. The greatest favorite of the public, unless he has the tact to vary his attractions, will in the end, find himself lying high and dry on the beach of neglect and forgetfulness. And this will be the case all the sooner, if it

should happen that a counter attraction is offered to the senses of the "million." So it happened in the instance of Hugh McNeile. Not gradually, but all at once, empty seats were to be seen in his church, where of late, pews had been at a premium. The fees to the sexton became alarmingly small, and the face of the beadle became strangely lugubrious. Fortune, proverbially fickle, in never more decided manner exemplified her attribute. But what caused the defection from the *quondam* favorite? Had his energies declined? By no means. Were his sentences less skilfully balanced, or his periods less carefully rounded? Nothing of the sort. Had he promulgated heretical doctrines or enunciated strange opinions which were at variance with the Bible? Far from it. Was his daily life inconsistent with his public ministrations? No one could assert that. Yet, from some cause or other, the influence he once possessed was clearly all but gone. The magnet had lost its attraction, and the human filings had ceased to cling to its pole. The reason of all this was the simple fact that there were now "two Richmonds in the field." Another wonderful man had ascended the London pulpit stairs, and by his very eccentricities of thought and action, was now carrying all before him. The new comet, blazing with wondrous brilliancy, a very gem in the heaven of intellect, attracted every eye and dazzled all by its strange splendor. The Irishman's star "paled its ineffectual fires," as the Scottish meteor flashed through the firmament. But transient indeed was that glitter and glory: in the days of which we speak, however, its melancholy ex-

tinguishment was not at all, or but very dimly prognosticated; yet whilst it lasted, nothing could exceed the enthusiasm of those who watched the phenomenon. Edward Irving, and Hugh McNeile, like two stars, could not shine in one sphere. This, McNeile had the penetration to discover before he wholly lost the ground he had previously gained. The partial withdrawal of public favor and popularity, *must* have galled one of so susceptible a temperament as himself, for no philosophy, we think, can entirely reconcile a man of genius to such a change. What course did he pursue? He well knew that the labor of Sisyphus was an easy task compared to that of him who should strive to regain lost popularity in London. But there were "fresh fields and pastures new" in which he might range, and so, preferring rather to rule absolutely than to share a divided crown, he left his rival in full possession of the public ear, and quitted London for Liverpool; and in the Northern Metropolis of Commerce he has ever since remained, exercising perhaps a greater influence within its boundaries, than any one other of its inhabitants—its chief officer not excepted. It has been said, and with truth, that Dr. McNeile is "monarch of all he surveys," in his particular sphere of action. His will is indisputable, and his word is law. Warwick was not more celebrated as a King-maker, than is Dr. McNeile as a manufacturer of Liverpool Mayors. Out of the pulpit as well as in it he is all powerful, and even the ladies of Liverpool acknowledge and bow to the authority of their idol, for little short of an object of idolatry is he to the fair por-

tion of his flock. And this is not in the least to be wondered at, for seldom, if ever, has the pulpit been occupied by one who, in his own person, contains so many attractions, and whose mind is of so exalted an order.

That we may convey to our readers a correct idea of the "outward man" of this celebrated Divine, let us visit his church. We have threaded the busy streets of Liverpool, and arrive at the building where he officiates, full half an hour before the time appointed for commencing the service. But difficult indeed is it to gain admission, and still more arduous is the endeavor to leave the thronged aisles, and secure a snug pew.

Still increases the crowd, until at length the spacious building is literally crammed with humanity; the bonneted portion of the congregation being evidently in the majority, as usual. And a perfect blaze of beauty is presented by this assemblage of Lancashire Witches. It is not, however, exactly the place or time, to indulge in criticisms on countenances, so, with an effort we fix our eyes on our prayer-book, strive to check our wandering thoughts, and join, we trust sincerely, in the devotional exercises of the evening.

The prayers are ended, a hymn is being sung, and whilst its last line lingers on the lips of the congregation, the minister of the place appears in the pulpit. A glance tells us that McNeile is before us, for portraits innumerable have made us familiar with the exact features of his countenance — and a significant countenance it is!



Tall, but not stout, is the figure of Dr. McNeile, and very graceful does it look, attired as it is in the flowing robes of the Church. But the face is what rivets one's attention, by its remarkable charm. I will endeavor to describe it.

Phrenologists might fall into fits of rapture, when surveying the lofty and expansive forehead of our subject, and painters might rejoice at the bold sweep of the now almost white hair, which partially overshadows it, and which is so carelessly, yet so picturesquely disposed. But the eyes, certainly, to the great majority of observers, would form the chief points of attraction. These are wonderfully fine; large, dark, and glowing, yet possessing a peculiar gazelle-like softness, they surpass, in beauty, all other eyes which we have seen in mortal orbits. There is, too, when their owner is pouring forth his eloquent denunciations, a defiant boldness in them, which is haply characteristic of the speaker's mind. And remarkably varied is their expression. Now soft and dewy, as those of the gazelle's, and which, without any straining after similes, they resemble, now flashing with indignant fire; now beaming with tenderness, and anon possessing a sternness which makes one almost quail beneath their gaze. The nose is finely formed, the mouth most delicately chiselled, and, like the eyes, capable of a vast variety of expression. Who that has seen and heard McNeile has not noted how scornfully the upper lip can curl, or how sweet is the smile which at other times lingers there. The complexion is a mixture of pure white and red, and, take Dr. McNeile alto-

gether, it would be difficult to discover another in whom fine mental and physical qualifications so happily meet and combine.

How often does it occur — and every person's experience proves it — that a single defect mars a whole cluster of excellences. The peacock attracts us by its green and golden plumage, but scares us by the harshness and dissonance of his cry. Start not, reader; we have not the slightest idea of associating the manly attractions of McNeile with the glittering glory of a bird. What we mean is that, in many cases, the disagreeable voice of a minister alone banishes from our minds all the favorable impressions which his personal appearance had excited. It is not so, however, in the instance of our present subject; the tone is to the full as harmonious as we might have been led to expect from the appearance of the instrument.

To drop metaphor, the voice of Dr. McNeile is wonderfully fine, and is as superior to that of any other person we have ever heard, as the tones of the organ is to that of any other musical instrument. To thoroughly understand what a voice it is, it must be heard, — for how can a pen hope to describe the peculiarities of sound? Suffice it to say, that all who have heard McNeile agree in asserting that no pulpit orator of our day possesses so remarkable a vocal organ. At times its tones are music itself; and on no occasion are they harsh or discordant. There is a majesty, too, in his manner, which wonderfully adds to the effect of his utterance. His action is energetic, yet graceful; and dignified, though simple; and

whilst exhibiting the graces of oratory, he never degenerates into feebleness, or disgusts with strainings after effect. His vigorous mind preserves him from the former evil, and his strong good sense effectually prevents him from nauseating us with the latter.

No one can be inattentive, we think, whilst McNeile is preaching. The very first sentence he utters secures attention, and each succeeding remark increases it. The great feature of his oratory is boldness — boldness, perhaps arising as much from a consciousness of his own powers, as from a conviction that he is uttering great truths. But with all our respect and admiration for Dr. McNeile, we do not consider him to be a deep thinker — there is great talent, but little profundity in his pulpit discourses — and, popular as he is, we venture to say that he shines less in the pulpit than on the platform. There he is at home, for released from those trammels which the clergyman *must* feel around him in the sacred desk, he can give a loose rein to his impetuous temper, and allow his eloquence to take broader and bolder flights. Who that has seen him on the platform of Exeter Hall, and there witnessed his form dilate, and his eye kindle, as he launched forth the thunderbolts of his eloquent indignation against the Romish Church, will not agree with us in thinking that, great as he is in his church at Liverpool, he is still greater as the orator of the public meeting, or the controversialist of the Theological Arena.

## CHAPTER XXI.

A CLUSTER OF CHURCHES. MOUNT VERNON CHURCH. THE CHOIR. CONGREGATIONAL SINGING. THE REV. E. N. KIRK. SKETCH OF HON: AND REV. BAPTIST W. NOEL.

WHAT a cluster of churches! This surely cannot be the "bad eminence" of which we have heard so much, for on this hill-top are five or six places of religious worship almost crowding upon each other. We are now standing in front of one, rich in Gothic adornments, which a friend beside us, who is somewhat strongly tinctured with the rigid simplicity of Puritanism pronounces to be too ornate for a Temple dedicated to the worship of God. With him, in this opinion, we cannot agree. We have, we confess it, a liking for the munificence of ecclesiastical fancies; the stained glass, through which

"The light from high-arched windows thrown  
Turns into gems the pavement stone;"

the Aaronic and Mosaic figures, the Baptist and St. Paul;—in carving; the rich, loud organ, and the altar piece, all this we like, aye, and perhaps more, for God should be worshipped with the best of every thing; best architecture, best painting, best music, best sculpture, best poetry, and best genius.

But this Swedenborgian Church is not the one to

which we are bound to-day. So quitting its precincts, we soon reach Ashburton Place, where is situated Mount Vernon Church, in which officiates the subject of our present sketch, the Rev. Edward N. Kirk. Among all the men of this book there are none more worthy of an extended notice. There is not one more esteemed, or popular in Boston. Well could we devote long space to an analysis of his mind and his method, in its relation to the times; but see, our volume approaches its close, and we shall soon have altogether to lay down our pen.

Before we sketch the minister and his method of preaching, let us say a few words respecting the Mount Vernon Church, and fortunately for us, we have ready to our hand a brief account of it, which we extract from *Gleason's Pictorial*. The writer says:—

“On the morning of Wednesday, June 1, 1842, a new church of forty-seven members was organized in Park Street Church, and upon the same day, Mr. Kirk was installed its pastor by the same ecclesiastical council that assembled to organize the church. For more than a year the society worshipped in the lecture room of the Masonic Temple, when on the 4th of January, 1844, just six months from the day on which the corner stone was laid, the chaste and beautiful church in which the congregation now worship was solemnly dedicated to Almighty God. The site chosen for the church is one of the finest that could have been selected—elevated, quiet, and surrounded by a dense and intelligent population. The name chosen for this church, Mount Vernon Congregational, and the name by which the place is now

known, Ashburton, are both noble names, that pleasantly suggest America and the fatherland. The holy men and women engaged in this religious enterprise were kindred spirits, just such as the preaching of Mr. Kirk would set on fire; and his life and character would win to himself, and through him to a closer walk with God. The chosen band of forty-seven were favored with ardent piety, intelligence, wealth, talent, and more than all, and above all, a disposition to use them for the furtherance of Christ's kingdom in the earth. The Nestor, or rather the Nehemiah in this enterprise, was the pastor, who, with a thorough education, with ten years of pastoral experience, with the benefits of some extensive travel, with an unusual acquaintance with men and things, with burning devotion to his work, with the combined accomplishment of the gentleman and Christian, the orator and the pastor, was entirely qualified to lead on this infant church, under the glorious Captain of its salvation, to a ripened maturity in the course of a single decade. The work has been done. During the eleven years of the history of the church, it has had, perhaps, unparalleled success. More than eight hundred persons have been added to its communion, and in June, 1852, there remained connected with the church, five hundred and seventy-three members. It has sent out hundreds to aid in forming other churches, and to perform various good offices in the church and in the world. On Sunday, June 5th of this year, Mr. Kirk preached in his own church his eleventh anniversary sermon."

The interior of Mount Vernon Church is plainly-

elegant, if we may be allowed to make use of such a compound form. There is an air of quiet repose about it, and nothing gaudy or out of taste offends the eye. As we enter, a hymn is being very finely sung, one rich female voice in particular filling the building with its delicious harmony, and yet blending harmoniously with the tones from other lips, distinct above, but not overpowering them. The organ, that prince of instruments, is beautifully played, and taken altogether, we have seldom heard finer choir singing than that at Mount Vernon. But, after all, we question whether congregational singing is not far better and more appropriate than the best mere vocal exhibition in the world. And besides, it is, we think, somewhat ridiculous for about a dozen persons to utter the words,

“ Sweet is the work, my God, my King,  
To praise thy name, give thanks and sing,”

when the tongues of all but the choir are silent. And it is a little like an absurdity too for a whole congregation to stand with sealed lips when a few only in front of the organ sing,

“ Come let us *join* our cheerful songs ;”

as if the good folks below had little more to do with the matter, than to keep their hymn-books open in order to see if the verses were rightly delivered, or to merely criticise the execution.

Mr. Kirk's pulpit appearance is impressive. Without going into any minute analysis of its separate features,

we may observe that the characteristic expression of his face is a grave sweetness combined with dignity and solemnity. Although he is very far from "venerable," his hair already betrays the truth, that youth has departed. He seems, in fact, to be in the very meridian of his day of usefulness. A perfect ease of manner tells us that he has been much habituated to intercourse with men and manners. The same writer from whom we just now quoted, says:—

"He was born in New York, graduated at Princeton College, and immediately directed his attention to the law as his profession. Near this time, through the providence and grace of God, he became interested in the gospel, which he in future made his study instead of the law. Returning to Princeton, the ancient seat of an excellent "school of the prophets," he studied divinity. He first became known to the American churches as a preacher in behalf of missions, under the auspices of the American Board of Missions. So favorable an impression did he make while engaged in this work, that he received a favorable call to settle over a new church in Albany, N. Y., which he accepted. Here he labored for some ten years with remarkable success, when he accepted an appointment to visit Europe as the representative of a society in this country, whose object was to infuse Christian life into the Roman Catholic countries of Europe. Mr. Kirk spent several years abroad, in which he made good use of his time in advancing the interests of this society, and in self culture. He returned to this country about the year 1840, and preached



in different cities with such power and effect, that it seemed as though a young Whitefield had arrived upon our shores, and had entered our pulpits. He labored as an evangelist from city to city, and from town to town, for a considerable time, crowds hanging on his lips by day and by night, while he gained more decisive proof that he was not laboring in vain. While thus engaged in 1840-1, several active Christians of the Orthodox Congregational Churches had their eyes fixed on him as a suitable person to become the pastor of a new church, which they conceived should be formed in Boston."

Seldom have we listened to a pleasanter, or more impressive voice than that of Mr. Kirk, as he reads a hymn. There is a slight tremulousness in it which betokens that the reader feels the sentiments of the author. The soul seems to tremble under the influence of the emotional excitement. Free from everything that could impose, or attract, or excite by appeals to the senses — yet the recital of a hymn from those lips thrills us as we never were thrilled before; and you observe that, in reading the Scriptures, you are listening to a paraphrase, to a new translation, to a running exposition, in which is substance and matter for many sermons. But the prayer — oh, the prayer! how shall that be characterized? And indeed, we all feel that prayer is no subject for comment; and yet did you ever listen to prayer like this? quiet, deep, the hushed fluttering of a dove-like spirit through the heaven of its devout contemplations; this we may notice in it, that Adoration, and Ascription, and Devotion, form so large a portion of it, and

Petition so little. It is in prayer that we feel how powerful is the voice of God and Eternity in the soul of our teacher — our confidence in him is deepened. We know that he has travelled into “the heavenly places.” Oh, reader, the human heart is deep and deceptive; but do we not all know our instructor by the tone of his prayers? do not his supplications make our best music?

And when our preacher discourses to us, he still lingers near the light that rayed through his prayer like the glory round a Shekinah or a Shrine. Subjects, how remarkable, how simple, how full of majesty, how full of love, how full of light. We have never heard Mr. Kirk, but we have been disposed to apply to him the words of Salis, so beautifully translated by Longfellow.

“Into the silent land,  
Oh! who shall lead us thither?  
Clouds in the evening sky more darkly gather,  
And scattered wrecks lie thicker on the strand.  
Who leads us with a gentle hand,  
Hither and thither,  
Into the silent land?

“Oh land! oh land!  
For all the broken hearted!  
The mildest herald by fate allotted,  
Beckons, and with inverted torch, doth stand,  
To lead us with a gentle hand,  
Into the land of the great departed —  
Into the silent land.”

SILENCE AND SOLITUDE — those great teachers, those

wonderful ministering angels — from these our friend derives to a great extent the main portions of the instructions which he deals forth to his people. And perhaps most of us would need few preachers at all, if we could but allow silence to put its word into our minds, — if we did not so dread solitude and loneliness. But we can talk of solitude better than we can endure it. We can be eloquent upon silence, “but we cannot sit still.”

But the pastor commences his sermon, and as he does so the question suggests itself: Upon the whole, what do we want most in preaching? Even this, that a subject should be placed, not in an atmosphere of sound, but an atmosphere of light. The gift of hearing was conferred, not, we take it, to be a means of confounding the perceptions, and bamboozling the understanding, but as an avenue to the mind, in order that it may see; and so with images, since the world was made, and men began to speak freely, and things acquired a spiritual significance — Symbolism, how few of all the tropes and figures used have been understood or used to any purpose. Time was when every figure was an analogy, and suggested instantly a prompt resemblance to the matter in hand; but now they are more freakish, and their forms far less definite and obvious than the glasses of a Kaliedoscope. Perspicuity of style demands much more than the mere grammatical perspicuity of a sentence; it demands that the whole array of the thought, and the subject, should be marshalled before the hearer's mind. The style of these fine writers is like the setting

sun beheld through a mountain mist — all things are confused — everything lies shapeless and undefined ; yet you feel a sense of splendor, and you see a shadowing forth of glory ; you see enough and feel enough, to say, “ Oh, that the sun were shining clear and bright to-day ! ”

A characteristic of Mr. Kirk's preaching is his power of painting. His soul is filled with poetry of the richest order ; he does not, like some Artists, overcolor to conceal the poverty of his conceptions ; he does not attempt to atone for the weakness of his Epic by the pomp of his Phraseology ; his colors are simple, but they are exquisite ; he presents to us gems like those of Anthony Waterloo, or Wilkie, and he frequently gives to us a depth of scenery like that we admire in Cuyp. He can describe gloriously. He throws in the shades of pathos, and then, he holds all the hearts of his hearers in his hands. And now a summer tint, and the eye recognizes it, and the heart resumes its courage ; he must have the eye of an artist, keen, detective, discriminative ; he does not care about finishing the pictures he holds up ; it is sufficient that the likeness is seen. He seldom dips his pencil in yellow and purple ; the gamboge and the chrome do not here, as in many pictures, make the eye ache with their glaring rays. Then he does not crowd many objects together, (another freak with many painters,) to bewilder you with the many, and so prevent your criticisms upon the one. No ; but the living picture seen by the audience is reflected to their eye from its lying warm upon the preacher's heart. Such was the picture of Blind Bartimeus, which we listened to a few

months since, just prior to Mr. Kirk's departure for Europe.

Very few ministers are more beloved by their congregations than is Mr. Kirk. In the early part of the present year he received an invitation from a church in Philadelphia, but so attached was he to his Boston flock, that he could not be tempted to quit the scene of his successful labors. Just before he last left America for a foreign tour, he preached a farewell discourse, from a text which he had selected eleven years before, when he first took charge of the society. The passage was from the 24th chapter of Luke, the 49th verse : — “ And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you ; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” In the course of his late discourse he is reported as stating as follows : — “ In the year 1852, more united with this church than in any previous year, there being fifty-four added on profession of their faith. Since the organization of the church — and that, too, in a time of universal drought — more than four hundred have been hopefully converted, and two hundred and ninety-nine have joined us, coming out from the world, and seeking the things that pertain to eternal life. We have also done much in the way of conquering our covetousness. During the last year the sum of \$9,100 had been contributed by this church for benevolent objects, and so far the amount has been increased this year.”

There is one minister in England, who in many points resembles Mr. Kirk. I refer to that well-known Divine,

the Rev. Baptist Noel. And as it is probable that ere long this gentleman will visit America, I will conclude this sketch of the pastor of Mount Vernon church by an outline of the London Preacher.

No one can glance at Baptist Noel, without instinctively feeling that a man of "birth and breeding" stands before him; for let a certain set of people, whose delight it is to rail at all who are placed in a superior position to their own, say what they will, there is a peculiar air about our aristocracy, which is decisive and distinctive; a style which is "to the manner born," and which cannot be acquired. Every one knows that a gentleman is not a manufactured article, and that, to parody Moore's couplet,

You may spangle and dress up a man as you will,  
But the stamp of the vulgar will stick to him still.

Let it be remembered, we by no means desire to imply, that gentlemen are *only* to be found in the circles of the titled and rich. Far from it. We have met men who would adorn any position, in the humblest walks of life; and on the other hand have fallen in with blackguards of the first water, who are living libels on the nobility which they disgrace.

But let us picture Baptist Noel, as he appears in the pulpit.

Those of our readers who may have seen the portraits of Reginald Heber, the Bishop of Calcutta, will have little difficulty in imagining the *cast* of Baptist Noel's countenance. It is a remarkably attractive one; and

its attractive power lies in the serenity which pervades it. A high, broad forehead, indicates the possession of considerable intellectual power; and across it, rather carelessly, sweeps long light-brown hair, which leaves the left temple exposed. The eyes are of a grayish blue, if such a blending of tints is allowable; and they have a solemnly-sweet expression. It seems at first sight rather ridiculous to describe a man's nose—but prominent feature as it is, it is not to be neglected. Mr. Noel's nasal organ is slightly aquiline; well "chiselled," to use an artistic phrase, and in "harmony" with the other features. The mouth is well-shaped and very expressive, and the chin is rather long. The shape of the entire face is oval, and the head is gracefully set on the shoulders. Mr. Noel's figure is symmetrical; in height he is slightly above the medium stature; and clad in the habiliments of his sacred profession, he stands the very personification of that dignity and gentleness which should ever characterize the Christian Minister.

From the moment Baptist Noel commences his discourse, the attention of the hearer is riveted. His voice is melodious in the extreme; one more musical we think we never heard. Well do we remember the time when it first fell on our ears. The reverend gentleman had been announced to preach an anniversary sermon for the Church Missionary Society, in the fine old church of St. Mary, Redcliffe, Bristol. At that time, Mr. Noel was in the zenith of his popularity as a pulpit orator; but his chastened eloquence was not the only attraction, his known liberal opinions had gained him "golden opin-

ions" among all classes of Dissenters; many of the most rigid of these sturdy Nonconformists, and obstinate resisters of church-rates — people who would, on other occasions, have as soon thought of visiting Pandemonium as a Parish Church, now flocked to hear Noel. His habit of extemporaneous preaching, too, enlisted him in their favor; for many of them had, and have, for aught we know, a thorough contempt for *read* sermons. In short, Baptist Noel was, to use a stereotyped theatrical phrase, a "favorite." Even at that period, now some fifteen years ago, clear-headed men declared that he was a "great deal too liberal for the Church," and prophesied that with his views, he could not long remain within its pale. The event of the last year has verified their predictions. But we must not anticipate.

Clear as the sound of a silver bell sounded the musical voice of Baptist Noel, beneath the lofty ceiling, and along the columned aisles of the old church which we have incidentally referred to. Vast as the building was, and filled with echoes, each word which fell from his lips was most distinctly audible in the most remote parts of the church. The Missionary work was his theme, a most congenial topic for one whose expansive benevolence is universally admitted. From a little Bible which he held in his hand, he read the text, and then proceeded to elucidate his subject. Commencing with a general allusion to it, in the shape of a graceful exordium, he speedily arrived at the chief point of his discourse, and then, with a graceful fluency, he reviewed the condition and prospects of that Missionary Society, whose interests he



was advocating. On such a field he was, to use a common but expressive phrase, "at home." Listening to his details of Missionary labor, in various parts of the world, was what might be termed a verbal panoramic treat. Coleridge, in one of his dreamy moods, said, "My eyes make pictures when they are shut;" and it may be remarked, that when Baptist Noel takes his hearers on a pulpit Missionary tour, he brings vividly before their mental vision the scenes he describes. In effect, Missionary advocacy is his *forte*. Seated comfortably in your pew, with half-closed eyes, it is a positive luxury to accompany him, in imagination, as he traverses the Missionary world. The graceful palm of India waves its feathery foliage beneath unclouded skies, and under its welcome shade we behold the proud Brahmin abandoning his idols, and leaving Vishnu for Christ. The Pacific, studded with island-gems, lies blue and broad before us, and on them we behold temples rising, and civilization extending, and cruelty departing. And now

"The spicy breezes  
Blow soft o'er Ceylon's isle;"

and in that home of all that is beautiful in the Physical Creation, we see idols thrown to the moles and the bats, and gentleness substituted for violence. Still onward we go, and behold that great and mysterious country, China, partially opened before us. There we see the laborious Gutzlaff toiling in the midst of an indeed "perverse generation." Rises before us, too, the Pagoda

and the Joss house, and we view the boat-crowded river, and on its banks the Missionary Church. Again we speed on our world-journey and cross the deserts of the African Continent. Sierra Leone, as lovely a spot to look upon as ever gladdened the eye of mortal, but nevertheless the "white man's grave," rises picturesquely from the sea; but there, regardless of the pestilence that walketh by noon-day, works the Missionary, — the graves of his predecessors full in view, and with the ever-present feeling that in every breath he draws may float the elements of death. The fruitful Islands of the West are visited — lands where the oppressor's chain is broken, and the slave groans no more. And to many other portions of the earth's surface does the preacher, in imagination, convey us; and then, by a forcible appeal to his hearers, he convinces them of the claims of the Missionary Society, and concludes his energetic, yet calm discourse, by a personal application of his text to the consciences of those to whom he has been preaching.

On ordinary occasions, Mr. Noel's sermons are characterized by an uniform excellence. Those who go to hear him, in the expectation of meeting with something strange or startling, will be assuredly disappointed. His eloquence is like the course of a calm river, gentle, and musical in its flow. From the moment he commences his sermon, until its conclusion, embracing usually about an hour, or an hour and a quarter, there is not the slightest impediment or interruption to the stream of his matter. And his voice is seldom raised above the pitch in which he commences; but then it is too musical, and

too gently modulated, to be monotonous. His sentences, carefully constructed, are remarkably smooth, and we imagine are the results of study-practice. This, however, is not marred by anything approaching to pedantry, for no one can hear Mr. Noel, and believe, for a moment, that the weakness of affectation clings to him. His principal fault, as a preacher, is elaboration; sometimes he dilates an idea until almost all trace of it is lost, or it is but faintly perceived. This is not an habitual fault; nevertheless, it is sufficiently frequent to mar the effects of some of his pulpit productions. His action is slight, graceful, and such as might be supposed in a man of his disposition.

A great, and distinctive feature in the preaching of the Rev. Baptist Noel is his frequent use of Scriptural quotations. These, whatever may be the topic of his discourse, are most felicitously introduced, not *dragged* in. We have heard some ministers *fit*, as it were, their subjects to certain passages, for the sake of a display of Biblical erudition, forgetful of the rule that the extract should aptly illustrate the subject matter. In Mr. Noel's case the quotations fall easily and naturally into their proper places, and invariably throw light upon, or confirm that which preceded them. We know but of one other minister who excels in this respect, and who, equally with Mr. Noel, enjoys the reputation, and deservedly too, of being a "Bible Preacher." We refer to the Rev. James Sherman, the successor to Rowland Hill.

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“The time might come when I may deem it necessary that I should secede from the Church of England ; that time has not yet come ; nor do I see any probability of its speedy arrival.” Such were the words which the Rev. Baptist Noel uttered on the platform of the Music Hall, in Store street, fifteen or sixteen years ago, at a public meeting. The time, however, *did* come, and one fine morning, the religious world of London was startled by the announcement, that the popular Minister of St. John’s Chapel, Bedford Row, was about to quit the Church of England, of which he had been so long a member and an ornament, and join the great body of Dissenters. Many had been prepared for this step on the part of Mr. Noel, but on the majority of Churchmen the announcement fell like a thunder-clap. Then arose the question, to which body of Dissenters was he about to attach himself, and many were the conjectures on this point. Until the matter was positively known, Independents, Wesleyans, Baptists, and Huntingdonians, claimed him as their own ; and in the expectation, that on the occasion of his farewell sermon, the preacher would mention the sect of his selection, that discourse was looked forward to with the most intense interest.

Never, perhaps, had been witnessed so much excitement in the neighborhood of St. John’s Chapel, as on the last Sunday of Mr. Noel’s ministrations there. Hours before the doors were opened, Chapel street was thronged from end to end by eager people ; and, when at length the entrances were free, the multitude rushed in, and took forcible possession of private pews by clam-

bering over them, and in a very few minutes completely filled the edifice. For a time, the scene was one of utter confusion. When, at length, the sermon commenced, all ears were opened to hear the preacher's reasons for leaving his pastorate; but, to the disappointment of all, a simple, faithful, scriptural sermon was preached—and the subject which had been looked for was scarcely alluded to. In a few weeks afterwards, all doubt on the subject was dispelled by the public baptism, by immersion, of Mr. Noel, in the Rev. James Harrington Evans's Chapel, John street. On that occasion he delivered an appropriate address, which, as it has been published and extensively circulated, we need not quote from in this place; and shortly afterwards appeared a bulky volume, in which Mr. Noel, at considerable length, explained his reasons for seceding from the Establishment, and joining the Baptist body of Christians.

The exultation of the Dissenters at this accession to their ranks was unbounded. Mr. Noel's book ran rapidly through many editions—and the ministers of several denominations read portions from it on stated evenings in their vestries to those of their congregations who could not afford to pay for it. Now, however, the excitement has subsided, and the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, instead of being a minister of the Establishment, occupies the comparatively humble position of Pastor of the Chapel in which he was baptized—he having succeeded to the pulpit which became vacant at the death of Mr. Evans. The once Chaplain to the Queen is now

preacher to a Congregation, amongst which are numbered some of the poorest of her subjects — for on the occasion of a recent visit to John Street Chapel, we sat next to an individual in the free seats, who, perhaps, fancying long coat-sleeves a luxury, wore his no lower than his elbows. There are, however, many wealthy persons among the congregation — and it may be added, that a considerable number of Mr. Noel's former hearers at the Church have followed his example, and worship with him in the Chapel, which latter is but a few hundred yards from the former.

Some people are apt, when talking of heroes, to imagine that those only are entitled to the laurel crown who “wade through fields of slaughter.” This hero-worship is confined to the Cæsars, the Soult, the Wellingtons, and the Napoleons of History. But the battle plain is not the only field from whence heroes spring, or where bold deeds are wrought. Humble life can and does furnish numerous examples of heroism, un-noted it may be by the historian, but not the less heroism for the omission from history's page. Our daily paths are filled with heroes. The self-criminated drunkard, who, spite of derision and inclination, bursts the ignoble chain which long had bound him, is a moral hero. And the meek, enduring woman, who, through seasons of severe trial, has held on her way uncomplainingly, though scourged by the neglect of him who should have been her guardian; and who, with a dark cloud ever over her, has trained her children with a strong pious endeavor, is a heroine — aye, as great, or a greater one than Joan of

Arc ; and he who long has fostered one set of principles, but finding by some burst of light that they were erroneous, abandons them, is a hero too. Remembering this, we may easily suppose that it required no light effort for Baptist Noel to leave a long-cherished Church, and bid adieu to strongly attached friends — for conscience' sake. During the whole of his career, mild and beneficent as it has been, he possessed that great gift — a decisiveness of character. This was strikingly apparent some years since, when the Bishop of London made his fierce onslaught on the London City Mission.

To the eternal honor of Baptist Noel be it recorded, that he was the *only* clergyman who scorned the Prelate's threat, that those of the Ministers of the Establishment in his diocese, who refused to abandon that Society, should be ejected from their pulpits. Refuse he did — but ejected he was not.

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At first sight it appears rather strange to behold Mr. Noel in the pulpit of a Baptist Chapel, divested of gown and bands. The strange feeling, however, soon wears off ; for there is the same classic head, the serene eye, the same sweet and dignified expression, and the same musical voice. The sincerity, too, is quite as genuine, the appeals quite as fervent, and the piety as sincere as ever. The scene of the Christian's labor is altered ; the labor of the Christian is as devotedly pursued as ever. And why not ? After all, worshippers of the Son of Righteousness gaze on the same orb, and reflect

his brightness, though different be the points, and "wide as the poles asunder" from whence they gaze. Blind bigôts they who arrogate to their own sect the right to point the road to Heaven!

Mr. Noel has figured as an author as well as a preacher. They who are curious to see him "in print" may be glad to know that he is the author of "Notes of a tour in Ireland, in 1835," and of several pamphlets. Many of his sermons have been published in the periodicals of the day — in fact he has been a fortune to young stenographers, who have made a market of his discourses. He has also published a volume of verses, of which candor compels us to say, that they contain more piety than poetry.



*Jo*





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